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ABSTRACT

In his brief introduction, the editor states that this collection of writings is intended to assist the understanding of a child's language development as he masters his mother tongue. It is especially for teachers just beginning in bilingual education. The predominance of essays on the experiences of Spanish-speaking people in this collection is because these writings are more readily available and not that they are thought more valid than other material. Included in this collection are a strategy for bilingual education, an essay on learning to read in a bilingual context, an excerpt from the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights report entitled "Toward Quality Education for Mexican Americans, "an essay "A Framework for Implementing Bilingual Education," excerpted from a report by the National Puerto Rican Development and Training Institute, and other pieces that represent the experiences of students and teachers. (JA)

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Teaching bilingual children

Edited by Arthur Tobier

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We find our identities through our language. That language must uphold us, give us confidence, tell us we belong to our world and each other. We become absurd when our language divides us from our world (and when our world divides us from our language), divorces us from our surroundings and our fellows, and makes us speak of foreign things as if they were familiar. As Ralph Ellison has stated: "One uses the language which helps to preserve one's life, which helps to make one feel at peace with the world, which screens out the greatest amount of chaos." People concerned with children's development and with designing school programs are just at the beginning stages of understanding the processes of language development; the beginning stages of understanding how children master their mother tongue and how it is and should be used in school. In publishing this collection of writings, the Workshop Center hopes to add to that understanding, as well as help teachers, particularly those just beginning in bilingual education, to see the value of making connections between language and experience and to become sensitive to the rich cultural, historical, and emotional basis of language.

A final note of qualification. While the articles chosen to be included in this publication lean heavily on the experiences of Spanish-speaking people, that has mostly to do with the fact that the material was more readily available than writings focusing on the experiences of other ethnic groups; it is not to suggest that these experiences are any more valid. The fact is that in their underlying concern with the basic issues of bilingualism these experiences are fairly typical, and they have been used interchangeably in this publication to offer as full and meaningful a discussion as possible. They are cases in point.

Nor is this publication meant to be objective. The experiences described speak for themselves. They are far more valid than any objective notion we can claim to make.

Arthur Tobier

A necessary strategy

Rupert Trujillo

Much is being said and written about bilingual, bicultural education. I don't intend to go into elaborate definitions about the concept. Rather, I want to briefly state what bilingual, bicultural education is not.

It is not a process that treats the child as if somehow he is deficient.

It is not a process whose only and ultimate objective is to perfect the use of the English language.

It is not a process that ignores the child's background and cultural heritage.

It is not a process which considers only one way of living and behaving as legitimate.

And finally, it is not a process which assumes that education is a privilege.

Bilingual, bicultural education serves a number of positive purposes for American Public Education and is therefore seen as a necessary educational strategy.

1. It enriches and preserves the cultural and human resources of a people and, consequently, a country.

2. It creates better human relationships among people from differing background.

3. It launches a child immediately into a world of learning as opposed to a world of confusion and frustration.

4. It creates for the child an atmosphere of personal identification, self-worth, and achievement.

A quote from Margaret Nick, a Native American from Alaska, seems appropriate at this point. She says,

> I can't predict how my children should be educated. I can't predict how you should teach my children or what you should teach my children. But one thing I do know and that is that if my children are proud, if my children have identity, if my children know who they are and if they are proud to be what they are, they will be able to encounter anything in life. Some people say a man without education might as well be dead. I say a man without identity, if a man doesn't know who he is he might as well be dead.

Finally, bilingual, bicultural education makes it possible for persons from the dominant group to modify value structures. That is to say, when an individual processes through educational experiences which place

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This is excerpted from a paper presented at the National Bilingual Bicultural Institute held in Albuquerque, New Mexico, November, 1973.

cultures, values, beliefs and customs different from his own in proper perspective, a strong possibility exists for value modification. You see, we have spent many hours, months and years studying and learning about "These" or "Those" people — the minorities. As important as this is, it is not the crux of the problem. Each of us must undergo a process of self-examination for self-understanding. Each individual holds values; rarely, if ever, do we examine what those values are. More importantly, if we know what values we hold, we never attempt to determine "why" we believe or value what we do.

Value clarification and modification has to occur among us if America is to avoid total chaos.

Let me cite some examples of expressed values which lead to conflict and lack of understanding.

In the early 1900s a famous educator was writing about America and minorities. Dr. Cubberly wrote:

> Everywhere these people settle in groups or settlements to set up their national manners, customs and observances. Our task is to break up these groups or settlements, to assimilate and amalgamate these people as a part of our American race and to implant in their children, so far as can be done, the Anglo-Saxon conception of righteousness, law and order, and our popular government, and to awaken in them a reverence for our democratic institutions and for those things in our national life which we as a people hold to be of abiding worth.

One might say, "Yes, but that was in the early 1900s, that doesn't happen today." Let me cite a few more up-to-date versions of the same mentality.

In the spring of 1971, the *Sun News*, a newspaper in New Mexico, carried a letter to the Editor. The letter was in response to a student walk-out in a New Mexican community. The writer says,

> I was trying to get my education so that I may go out and better guide our great nation tomorrow when I'm one of the leaders also .... I must admit that after having lived in Las Cruces for 18 years, I was under the impression that this was New Mexico, United States of America, and not Mexico. I also thought that our national language was English and not Spanish ....

In 1971, several of us received a copy of a letter from an administrator at a university. This letter came from a very sensitive Anglo who had applied for a position in the foreign language department. He wanted us to know what the administrator had to say. The letter reads:

> Dear _____,
>
> Glad to hear from you. I've been thinking about you, too, lately, and wish that I could tell you to come home. The old days of personal power have, however, given way to the search committee syndrome so your excellent qualifications will have to join the considerable numbers of others in the hopper. This sudden administrative enthusiasm for Chicanism is rather a response to an historical accident rather to any of the demonstrated needs on my part which have been forwarded over the years. I do feel that the administration's policy is to seek the best-qualified person for a particular job and to give preference to a Chicano, other things being equal. It is my private opinion that, for a variety of obvious reasons, a

Chicano is less likely to be as well qualified as a Gringo wasp SOB, so there may be a thin ray of hope for you.

We'll probably have to wait until spring for final approval of openings due to the usual bureaucratic reasons, but I'll let you know if anything of interest to you occurs before then.

Very sincerely yours,

In 1973 the *Lubbock Avalanche Journal* carried an editorial entitled, "Bilingual Extremism Cited."

Representative H.R. Cross, R-Iowa, was set off by a statement that many children, chiefly Spanish-surnamed, are unable to speak English when they enter the first grade. "Well," he asked, "where does the responsibility for that kind of situation rest? Clearly it rests upon the home. If a child has not learned to speak some English before he or she enters the first grade ... there is something wrong with the family." Representative Wayne Hoys, D-Ohio, commented, "What do we want to do? Perpetuate these people so as not to be able to speak English forever and ever?"

The point I'm trying to make is that so long as individuals harbor attitudes and values such as those revealed in these quotations, we will continue to experience conflict and hostility. Beyond that, I'm saying that offering bilingual education only to minorities is only half the answer. Speaking more than one language anywhere in the world, including the United States, has always been considered to have positive values for a population.

The New Mexico Attorney General in 1971 rendered the opinion that teachers in New Mexico must speak English and Spanish. In May 1971, the *Albuquerque Journal* carried an article saying that, "The New Mexico Association of Classroom Teachers urged the State Department of Education to proceed with extreme caution in responding to the Attorney General's opinion."

Mrs. Dale Mathis chaired the Teacher Education and Professional Standards Committee and reported several considerations;

Only a small segment of our student population is truly Spanish speaking.

Two problems come to mind with that statement: One is the notion that if some individual doesn't speak "standard" Spanish -- whatever that means -- then that individual isn't *truly* Spanish speaking, and secondly, the numbers game enters into the picture. The system uses numbers to justify action or inaction. The decision tends to be made pro or con depending on what's convenient or expedient for the individuals in power. Watergate is a case in point.

Thus, to say we don't need bilingual education because only a small segment of our student population is truly Spanish speaking is like saying we don't have any blacks around here; therefore we don't need to know, respect, and understand them or their culture. Presumably, one of America's ideals is that of understanding, accepting, and respecting cultural differences. As Helen D. Wise, President of NEA, writes, "Fostering an appreciation of different cultures, cultural values, and languages is one of the best ways to help eliminate prejudice."

. . . . Bilingual, bicultural education is not a substitute for a well-developed and implemented educational program. It is not a program that

minimizes the importance of English. Those who charge us with unwillingness to learn English are in effect questioning our rational powers. Mexican Americans are keenly aware of the importance of languages — both Spanish and English. We are aware that English is the language of the land and that different benefits can accrue to those who have command of the language. However, the monolingual educational system, as we know it, has not served to give Mexican Americans command of that language. Furthermore, and again, even those who have command of the English language experience prejudice and discrimination; thus our insistence upon bicultural education for all.

AMERICAN HERITAGE

There are perhaps some among us who may feel inclined to let some one else make the effort; perhaps because the prospect of success seems remote, perhaps because of lack of conviction of the worthiness of the task. But let me remind all of us of a great concept which our Indian ancestors gave us which brings home our responsibility for action. They wrote in their codices that the life of each person is irrevocably tied to the life of some other. Therefore, whatever situation a person finds himself in is the result of the actions of another person sometime somewhere. And no matter what action a person takes, at sometime, somewhere that action will affect the life of another person. And it follows, conversely, that whatever action a person does not take will have a similar effect. So you see, there is no way that any of us can cop out. Whatever actions we take, whatever actions we *do not* take, are bound to count in the long run.

Armando Rodriquez, president,
East Los Angeles Community College

A language of soft vowels

Oscar Zeta Acosta

All the faces are brown, tinged with brown, lightly brown, the feeling of brown. Old men with coarse black hair, wrinkled weather-beaten hands. Levis and Mexican ranchero hats of tough, slick matted straw. Sometimes there is a red feather or a green one from a bantam rooster sticking out from the band. Their cigarettes smell of earth and burning leaves rather than of machines. Brown, black cowboy boots, sometimes sandals of heavy leather straps, *huaraches* with soles from old rubber tires and sometimes barefooted boys with short-sleeved shirts and cotton pants from *El Calzetin*. These men do not speak much. They look out the windows into the cold night as we begin to cross the Ric Grande. A thick man with a khaki soldier uniform jumps on board the crowded car. He casually struts down the aisle, occasionally looking into the shopping bag held firmly by some woman. The women talk and chat and whisper, they do not pay him any attention.

Women of brown face, black, long hair and eyes for the devil himself. There are hundreds of singers from Juarez, thousands of my sisters, my cousins, my aunts and the seven Chicanos who graduated with me from Riverbank Grammar school. And they all are speaking in that language of my youth; that language which I had stopped speaking at the age of seven when the captain insisted we wouldn't learn English unless we stopped speaking Spanish; a language of soft vowels and resilient consonants, always with the fast rolling r's to threaten or to cajole; a language for moonlit nights in brown deserts and for making declarations of war on top of snow-capped mountains; a language perfect in every detail for people who are serious about life and preoccupied with death only as it refers to that last day of one's sojourn on this particular spot.

I hadn't heard the Spanish language spoken in public with such gusto since I'd left El Paso as a boy. I had personally stopped speaking Spanish in front of Americans or Okies after Mr. Wilkie, my grammar school principal, had threatened to expel me. We were playing keep-away, the guys from the West Side against the guys from Okie Town each grabbing, kicking, biting and slugging to regain possession of a worn-out football. The tall, brown-suited American man who'd just become the principal the year I carved Jane's initials on my left hand stood watch over us during our lunch break.

"Pasamela, cabron," I shouted to Johnny Gomez in my best Pocho Spanish. *"Que esperas, pendejo?"* And when he threw it, I ran across the goal line.

"Ain't no good," Floyd shouted with his red hair flying in his freckled

face.

"Why not? Every time we make one you say it's no good," I said.

Wayne Ellis said, "You guys are cheating. You can't use secret messages."

"Isn't that right, Mr. Wilkie?" Floyd shouted to the principal.

"Yes, that's right, boys ... I saw that," the tall man said.

"What do you mean?" I demanded. "I can carry the ball, too. This is keep-away. Everyone can go for it."

He came right up close to me and whispered, "But you can't speak Spanish, Oscar. We don't allow it."

"What? ... you say I can't talk in Spanish here?" "That's right. This is an *American school* ... we want you boys to learn *English.*"

"Even when we play keep-away? Even here?"

"If you want to stay in this school. Yes, you boys will have to speak only English while on the school grounds."

Perhaps if I had not been madly in love with Jane Addison I might have fought the tall man, but I didn't want to get kicked out of school, so I didn't speak in the language of my parents until that night in Juarez, some twenty-odd years later.

From the Autobiography of a Brown Buffalo *(Popular Library, 1972).*

FOCUSING ON THE PERSONAL

For the very young child what it is to be Puerto Rican very often has something to do with his own parents, his own family, with the transition from one culture to another. It is this environment of which he is part, and which at times pushes him into premature adulthood, that may be the the focus of his most personal concern. But we may be able to find acting and speaking and communicative situations where the child can work through things that he has not quite been able to deal with or about which he would like to learn more and, in particular, where he can talk more to his peers.

Vera John, at the Workshop Center

Classrooms and streets: some comparisons

John Macnamara

Some things children seem to learn naturally; others they have to be taught. Unaided, they seem to learn to walk and to perceive the world visually; on the other hand nearly all children have to be taught arithmetic. Language is a peculiar embarrassment to the teacher because outside school children seem to learn a language without any difficulty whereas in school with the aid of teachers their progress is halting and unsatisfactory. It is common experience that when translated to a town where their native language is not spoken children will become reasonably proficient in the new language in six months. It is equally common experience that after six years of schooling in the second language, whatever the teaching method, most children emerge with a very poor command of the language. The first set of experiences shows that children are possessed of a very powerful device for learning languages; the second shows that the school harnesses the device only in a most inadequate manner. My article is an attempt to arrive at an explanation of the school's relative failure and to derive therefrom guidelines for teaching. I am encouraged to do so because of the overwhelming evidence from common experience that the child has vastly more language learning potential than he shows in the classroom. Indeed, language is the sole school subject of which we have this information, and consequently is the subject where the prospects of improving learning are the brightest and most substantial.

THE CAPACITY TO LEARN A LANGUAGE

The function of the human language learning capacity is defined with reference to a genuine language, such as French or German. If we could specify exactly the code which we call French we would have taken the first and most important step in the direction of specifying the nature of the language learning capacity. The second step would be to specify the actual learning process whereby a person grapples with the code and masters it. The troubles with this approach, however, are massive: we are very far indeed from being able to specify a code like French, *and we are even further from being able to specify the language learning process.*

I have argued elsewhere (Macnamara, 1972) that infants learn their mother tongue by first determining, independent of language, the meaning which a speaker intends to convey to them and

then working out the relationship between the meaning and the expression they heard. In other words, the infant uses meaning as a clue to language, rather than language as a clue to meaning. The argument rests upon the nature of language and its relation to thought, and also upon the findings of empirical investigations into the language learning of infants. The theory is not meant to belittle the child's ability to grapple with intricate features of the linguistic code. These must be grasped even if the clue is usually -- though by no means always -- to be found in meaning. The theory claims that the main thrust in language learning comes from the child's need to understand and to express himself.

Contrast, now, the child in the street with the child in the classroom. In the street he will not be allowed to join in the other children's play, not be allowed to use their toys, not even be treated by them as a human being, unless he can make out what they say to him and make clear to them what he has to say. The reward for success and the punishment for failure is enormous. No civilized teacher can compete. But more to the point, the teacher seldom has anything to say to his pupils so important that they will eagerly guess his meaning. And pupils seldom have anything so urgent to say to the teacher that they will improvise with whatever communicative skills they possess to get their meaning across. If my analysis of infant language learning is correct, as I believe it to be, it can surely explain the difference between the street and the classroom without placing any serious strain on the analogy between first and second language learning.

I want to carry this analysis further and apply it to the school, but before I do I want to clear up one theoretical matter. Many people imagine that babies learn languages in a special manner which is different from the way older persons learn them. They miss the obvious point that for an adult to know a language is in all essentials the same as for a baby to know it. Since the product is the same, the simplest hypothesis is that the learning process is the same. Suits of clothes which look identical are probably cut from the same pattern. There is then just as much magic in an adult's learning a language as in a baby's doing so. And in the absence of all evidence to the contrary, *we can safely hypothesize that it is the same magic.*

SOME GUIDELINES FOR THE TEACHER

Though of late some writers (e.g., Asher 1972) have proposed that language teaching in classrooms should be modelled on the communication between mothers and babies, no one, so far as I am aware, has gone ahead to make practical deductions from what we know of recent studies of language learning among babies. Yet such deductions are neither impractical nor counter-intuitive to what we know of the schoolchild. Let us, then, assume that the schoolchild's mind is so fashioned that he approaches language learning largely as an infant does, and see what follows.

Our first conclusion must be that *teacher and children wallow in almost total misunderstanding.* The teacher believes that language is to be respected and caressed for its own sake, that one needs to do penance and prepare oneself to capture the fine points of pronunciation and grammar as Sir Galahad prepared himself to seek the Holy Grail. Children are simply stunned by this attitude.

They believe that language is for communicating: they see it as a modest tool, but communication for them is the essence of the business. I believe the children are right and the teachers wrong. I also believe that the only way to make the linguistic magic work is to become vitally engaged in communicating something.

From this central confusion on the part of teachers follow several corollaries. Babies begin with one-word sentences and manage to communicate very well in them. Schoolchildren are usually required to speak in full sentences in an unnatural manner: "that is not a hen; that is a lawnmower." The teacher sees virtue in full sentences and the schoolchild is at a loss to know why.

Parents are proud of any effort which a small child makes to express himself in words. They welcome his phonological innovations; they accept his bits of words; and they understand his telegraphese. As a matter of fact, parents seldom correct a small child's pronunciation or grammar; they correct his bad manners and his mistakes on points of fact (see Gleason, 1967). Somehow, when a child is vitally concerned with communicating, he gradually gets over his difficulties and eradicates errors, at least to the point where society accepts his speech. His parents' attention is on his meaning, not on his language, and so probably is his own. And curiously he and his parents break one of psychology's basic learning rules. Psychology would advise that he should be rewarded only for linguistically correct utterances, whereas parents reward him for almost any utterance. But then the folk widsom of the Italians, older than experimental psychology, has created a proverb which gives the lie to psychology and agrees with parent and child -- *sbagliando s'impara* (by making mistakes we learn). By contrast the conscientious teacher pounces on all departures from phonological and syntactic perfection: she does not care what the student says as long as he says it correctly. The schoolchild, unused to such treatment in learning his first language, is unnerved and finds himself at a disadvantage. He does not, of course, analyze the situation; he merely becomes bored or concludes that he lacks the talent for languages.

Finally, a mother does not have another verbal language in which to talk to the baby if he fails to understand her. She has to make do with gestures, facial expressions and exaggerated tones of voice. Because they are both involved in communicating they usually manage somehow. How different it is in the classroom! Teacher and child usually have another common language, and could communicate better if they really needed to. Indeed they often do have recourse to the other language. Teachers, unlike mothers, do not exploit to the full the basic natural language of gestures, intonation, facial expressions, and events in the environment to provide the child with clues to the meaning. As a result, classroom conversations seem remote, unreal, and often lifeless compared with the conversations of a mother and child. Basically it is the same disease that we have encountered before: The teacher sees language mainly as something to be learned; the child sees it mainly as a means of communication. He is seldom interested in language, but rather in the information it conveys.

SOME COUNTERARGUMENTS

Partly in opposition to the position I am taking is a common belief that one's language device atrophies rather early in life. The evidence for this

is that babies pick up their mother tongue with what seems like great ease, and young children in suitable environments pick up a second language with little trouble, whereas adults seem to struggle ineffectively with a new language and to impose the phonology and syntax of their mother tongue on the new language. The argument has been supported with some evidence from neurophysiology (Penfield and Roberts, 1959), but the value of this evidence is dubious, to say the least.

I suspect that the evidence which most supporters of the theory draw upon confounds two phenomena, the child in the street and the child in the school. Small children don't go to school; older ones usually learn languages in school rather than in the street. We have already seen that these two phenomena must be distinguished, but besides all this, many families have the experience of moving to a new linguistic environment in which the children rapidly learn the language and the adults do not. This happened frequently to English families which moved to one of the colonies, such as India. In such cases, the linguistic experience might well be attributed to unfavourable attitudes towards the new language which the parents but not the children adopted. However, Italian families which migrated to the United States often met with a similar linguistic fate -- the children learned English and the parents, despite favorable attitudes, did not. Is this conclusive evidence that language learning ability atrophies?

No! Let us take clear examples; let us compare a man of forty with an infant. We could not prove that the man was less skilled in language learning unless we gave the man an opportunity equal to that of the child to learn a language. We would need to remove the man from the preoccupations of his work and supply him with a woman who devoted a large part of her time and energy to helping him learn the language. Further, the woman would have to behave just like the mother of a small baby, which among other things would include treating anything the man said in his mother tongue as she would treat a child's babbling. Naturally such an experiment has never been carried out, and for that reason there are almost no grounds for the general fatalism about adults' ability to learn languages. On the contrary, what experimental evidence we have suggests that adults are actually better than children. Smith and Braine (in press) found adults superior at deciphering and remembering instructions given in what to them was a foreign language. Thus there are grounds for optimism in this area.

However, there is evidence that adults and even teenagers generally have difficulty in mastering the pronunciation and intonational patterns of a new language, or even a new dialect. Labov (1966) found that persons who moved to Manhattan after the age of twelve seldom came to sound exactly like persons who grew up there. Similarly, persons who learn a language after adolescence usually sound a little bit foreign. But this does not mean that they do not communicate in that language very effectively and even quite normally. It is unwise to overemphasize their phonological difficulties. *Apart from this there is no evidence that after adolescence one cannot learn a language as rapidly and as well as a small child.*

A second strategy employed to explain why infants and children in streets are better language learners than children in classrooms is to argue that the latter learn formally whereas the infant and the child in the street learns informally.

But since it is impossible to specify the elements and rules of a language, it follows that the term formal learning can be applied to language only in the loosest sense. If we cannot reduce language to formula, we cannot learn it by formula. The extent to which we cannot formulate a language is the extent to which our learning of it cannot be formal and this is to a very great extent. On the other hand there are useful rules or formulas which capture some of the regularities of a language. It is the case that these are often explicitly taught to adults, and they are never taught to infants. May we not speak of the adults' learning as being to this extent formal, and that of the infant as informal? And if so, is this an important difference? The answer is most unlikely to be an affirmative. The main reason is that the normal grammatical rules given to students are merely hints which so depend upon linguistic intuition, that they constitute very little evidence indeed for anything which can justly be termed formal learning; neither do they suggest a large difference in learning style and strategy between babies and adults.

Among the most commonly canvassed explanations for the relative lack of success in language work in classrooms is an unfavourable attitude among the students to the language or its speakers. I am sure that this is not without foundation, but I also feel that it is greatly exaggerated. The argument ought at least to deal with the fact that historically language shifts have generally been accompanied by unfavourable attitudes to a conquering people and its language. There has always been antipathy between the Irish and the English; yet English replaced Irish. The Highland Scots behaved just like the Irish, and while the Welsh proved tougher than either, they too seem to be in the process of changing to English. They are, of course, following in ancient footsteps, because centuries ago the Celtic languages of Europe succumbed to Latin. Despite determined efforts to prevent it, the people of Provence have accepted French in place of Provencal, and the Catalonians have learned Castilian in addition to Catalan. But there is no need to multiply examples!

A child suddenly transported from Toronto to Berlin will rapidly learn German no matter what he thinks of the Germans. Indeed when he makes his first appearance on the street and meets German children he is likely to be appalled by the experience. They will not understand a word he says; they will not make sense when they speak; and they are likely to punish him severely by keeping him incommunicado. I have argued elsewhere (Macnamara, 1972) that he will learn German because he must understand what is being said to him precisely when it is said, and he must communicate precisely when the need arises. His need to communicate has very little to do with what is commonly understood as an attitude to a people or its language.

CONCLUSION

To return to the main line of argument, which is to take the infant or the child in the street as the model, it is clear that the teacher's job is to set up the language class so that communication in the new language is essential to the students. This can probably be best done by turning it into an activity period. If the students are cooking, or engaged in handicraft, needs to communicate rapidly arise. The teacher, then could explain in the foreign

language what needed to be done and allow the student to demand further information and clarification. What a change that would be! The teacher should be so serious about this that she would allow what is being cooked or made to be spoiled if the student fails to understand. She should never fuss about language, but rather be delighted with all attempts to talk. Perhaps, there would be a lot to be said for mixing students of various levels of proficiency in the same activity in order to increase the linguistic resources. This would be more like the family, and it has the support of the excellent experience of such cooperation in small country schools. If the teacher tells a story, she should not break off every line to note unusual usages or to ask whether the students know some word. The story should be the thing, and the students should be obliged to ask for explanations when they need them. But this is not the place to give a detailed scheme. I will have to leave that to another time, or better still, to other people.

One final point. Babies do not differ much in ability to learn a language. Leave aside the deaf ones, those who are severely retarded mentally, and a few who have pathological linguistic troubles, and the rest seem to learn with little difficulty. One may be a little more talkative than another; one may progress a little more quickly than another and learn a larger vocabulary. But we must look closely if we are to notice linguistic differences and disentangle them from other variables such as general intelligence and vitality. In foreign language classrooms the linguistic variation is enormous, and this I take as a sign of failure to engage the children's *faculte de language*. I am not surprised to find enormous differences among people in solving mathematical problems, but I would be if I were to find them among people in walking. Walking, I take it, is "natural" whereas solving mathematical problems is somehow "artificial." It would seem that homes and streets produce "natural" language, whereas schools produce "artificial" language, and that the variation among students is an indication of the artificiality. Our task is to make the school more like the home and the street. My belief is that when we really learn this lesson, individual differences in linguistic attainment will cease to be striking. I also forecast a lean time for those whose business, as guidance counsellors, is predicting such differences.

The article is reprinted from Modern Language Journal. *John Macnamara teaches at McGill University.*

The paradox is that kids pick up new languages in the street very easily, but they have great difficulty in picking them up inside the classroom. How can we strengthen peer interaction in an informal classroom so that children get a chance to listen more to the spontaneous language of kids from their own language background and can practice that language as well as listen more to the second language and practice that second language? How can we strengthen peer learning in informal education?

Vera John, at the Workshop Center

In the chinatown ghetto

Stanley Chu

The bias in American schools against bilingual education has cut both ways. Not only has it deprived large numbers of children of the use of their mother tongue by refusing to bend the existing system of instruction in the English language only, but in some instances, as the following article attests, it has deprived children of a meaningful opportunity for education even within that system by failing to give non-native English speakers adequate English instruction; by failing, in other words, to recognize and deal with how one's native language encompasses one's reality.

The man was shocked that I could speak English so well. At the end of our seminar, he said the only other Asians he ever met spoke poor English or none at all. The experience reflects how spare the efforts have been in English language instruction for non-English speaking Asian children in this country.

Large numbers of non-English-speaking school children receive no special English language teaching. Where English is the language of instruction in almost every subject, such children are forced to operate with a handicap so large as to make public education practically meaningless for them.

San Francisco has the largest Asian population of any city outside the Asian world. Economic, social, and up until recent years, legal pressures from the white community have forced Chinese families to live in the Chinatown ghetto.

Preschool age children often must accompany their mothers to work in factories and shops within the Chinatown community. Although groups such as New York City's Asian Children's Underground exist on a limited basis, day care and other preschool groups in this area are very few.

Such pressures make it difficult for Chinese children to hear and speak English on the streets. So, the surrounding English language of the local neighborhood is less rich and varied and an important source of English language instruction is often nonexistent.

Last January, the Supreme Court handed down an important decision concerning the role San Francisco public schools have in the teaching of English to non-English-speaking Chinese children. The Court ruled that San Francisco public schools were failing to provide English language instruction to children of Chinese ancestry who did not speak English. Whether or not this was intentional, this resulted in denying them a meaningful opportunity for education within the existing city school system. Providing these children with the same facilities, books, teachers, and curriculum did not result in equal treatment, the Court held.

The Court used as the legal justification for its decision the fact that the San Francisco public schools had been receiving large amounts of federal financial assistance. The guidelines for receiving such money require school districts "to rectify the language deficiency in order to open" instruction to students who have linguistic deficiencies. In the case of the San Francisco public school system, approximately 1,000 Chinese children who spoke little or no English were

already receiving supplemental English language courses. But, even at the time of the Supreme Court ruling, 1,800 non-English-speaking Chinese children were being denied special English instruction.

This Supreme Court decision is a strong, affirmative move. Speaking, reading, and writing English well gives children a chance to receive a meaningful education within the existing school structure. But in the traditional form of accomplishing this goal, there exists the danger of an unintentional but effective denial of the important cultural wellsprings of energy. For the Asians, as with others, this denial often produces an overzealous concern for being adopted and assimilated by the white American culture. On my own childhood block in Los Angeles, some of my Asian friends as well as myself regarded Chinese and Japanese after-school language lessons like the stereotype attitude towards violin or piano lessons. Our attitude was one of "Why bother". English was spoken or at least very much encouraged in our homes, and often the drive by parents to economically succeed included hard work along with making themselves as unobtrusive, and therefore as "white," as possible on the job. My friends and I felt this, and responded in a similar way.

Even as children, we were tuned into the way others, and we ourselves, responded to our own Asian physical features. There still exists today some degree of animosity between Asians who are English dominant and those who are dominant in another language. "Fresh off the boat" is a slur used even by Asians against other Asians. Obviously, this is self-destructive, or at least destructive of the self. A strong and important argument can be made for English dominant Asians to learn their own ancestral Asian language. For the Asian-born or Asian-derived, the positive strengthening of one's identity as Asian-American should not and in truth cannot be denied. The learning of English should not preclude this strengthening, but rather increase self awareness and peace within oneself.

New york city perspective

Luis Mercado

In 1970, when I became principal of P.S. 75, our school was no different from other schools in other parts of the city, if we're talking now about the fact that children drop out all along the way, that children are failing *en masse*. Before the bilingual program, the Puerto Rican children in this school were not being tested, they were being placed in non-English-speaking classes, they were considered brain-injured or retarded. Their language was not spoken in the school. They were being isolated in the classrooms. They were disappearing into the walls, just withdrawing, living in their own cultural enclaves within the classroom.

Three years ago, some City College students made some observations of our classrooms, and were quite aware of this kind of withdrawal, passivity, timidity, as well as the behavior problems that were a result of children who had given up, and were not learning. In this school roughly nine out of every ten children of Puerto Rican and Hispanic background were approximately three years behind in all their academic areas.

In the three years that have passed, if I've done anything, I've deepened my convictions about bilingualism. Not only do I see children needing their native language along with the language of the dominant culture in which they also live, I see that children need their native language for a greater period of time. Instruction should continue in their native language. Their native language can support English. And English can support their native language. I really see this as necessary for their whole school life, not just for one or two or three years, which is all that the law requires now. Hopefully, New York State or the government of New York City will recognize that fact and make available that option for Puerto Rican and Hispanic children.

We started the bilingual program at P.S. 75 with two classes. We had our difficulties, particularly resentment and resistance on the part of many teachers and parents. We were bucking the pressure and desire for assimilation on the part of the middle income Puerto Rican and Hispanic parents who had made it. They felt that if *they* had made it, or if their oldest son or daughter had made

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This is taken from the transcript of an interview held earlier this year with Luis Mercado, principal of P.S. 75 in Manhattan.

it this way -- by assimilation -- why should these children have to make it any other way. Naturally they had success stories to point to in support of their not wanting bilingualism. Any school can have one, two, three, four, or five success stories, and then the success stories become the standard by which you measure everything. So we had some resistances there. America has never been very hospitable to bilingual education. The lesson it taught those who worked to succeed in it was not to question its values. And the values traditionally reinforce monolingualism.

How did we deal with those resistances? We met, we talked, we kept people fully informed. We worked entirely through volunteerism. We recommended children to go into the program; nobody was forced. We strove to get the cooperation of everyone. We talked the same way to people as I'm doing now; we told them the way things were. And no one could refute the particular facts. There were some children whose parents did not want them in the program and indeed they did not put them in the program, and all of these children have suffered from massive educational failure. We would not force children into the program because you need the parents' cooperation. Ultimately we could persuade, but the parents are the ones that have to decide. And there still are a few people in this district and in this school who would prefer to have their children fail than to have them learn in a bilingual way.

Bilingual education can be either for the English dominant child learning Spanish or the Spanish dominant child who needs to learn how to converse in English. We developed our thrust for the Spanish dominant children who were being disabled or massively retarded by the kind of education developed in this school before I came in. At least ninety percent of the children were not making it. And because the Puerto Rican parents were so conditioned in terms of authority to respect the teacher, to respect the school, to respect the principal, and would very rarely blame the teacher or the principal, they would blame themselves for the massive failure. And then they would be tremendously overwrought; they would feel terrific guilt, self-hatred even, which they would take out on their children. In the end, they would always blame their children for their "retardation," for not being able to read. They would blame it on lack of discipline. They would blame it on bad company. They would blame it on themselves, their family. And there would be tremendous feelings of inadequacy, which, again, drove parents further away from the school in terms of involvement. The very factor of educational failure kept many, many parents from participating in the life of the school and cooperating. They felt frustrated as well as ashamed. They felt really literally ashamed of their children's inability to function within our school environment. We've had our problems. We still have difficulty with parent involvement. It's a hard process when you're dealing with poor people who have to work virtually all day long and come home exhausted or, if they are activists, have too many involvements in the evening; you have to work out these things. Also, our initial group of teachers were very poorly trained to work with Spanish-speaking children and we had to engage them in massive training.

At the start, the bilingual program was too weak to operate as an independent unit. We had a lot of turnover that first year, for one thing. We needed to work with people who would support our concepts about bilingual education and we needed a place in which to train our people to work that way. In our particular setting the place that seemed

to have the most positive feelings towards bilingual education -- or at least did not resist the concepts of bilingual education -- was the Open Corridor Program. The parents association -- those parents who were supporting the Open Corridor -- felt that there was nothing inconsistent about that. So I made it one of the conditions of my support for the Open Corridor Program that I would also support the Bilingual Education Program, that you couldn't have one without the other. I thought both programs were good for children. And in terms of our particular environment, the bilingual education program would have been destroyed if it were part of a traditional class network in our school. You can't develop a bilingual program with self-contained classroom teachers who do not see themselves as part of a team or as part of a community of people, and who do not share the goals of these people, and who do not speak Spanish, and who know nothing about Puerto Rican or Hispanic culture. Obviously the traditional classroom wouldn't be the environment in which a program could grow.

Am I saying that bilingual programs can only work in an open classroom? No. Bilingual programs can "work" in settings other than Open Corridors, if by "work" you mean raising the level of "school success." For example, it can "work" in a traditional school, where only one child out of 10 is making it, by offering, over the years, a situation whereby 20 percent, or 30 percent, or even 40 percent of the kids will be making it in terms of test scores. With tests as the criteria, such a program will be very attractive.

However, we're talking now about schooling as part of an integrated setting, where the Puerto Rican children are not a majority in the school. In P.S. 75, they're only about 20 percent of the population. As I said before we needed support for a bilingual program. In our settings there was no support from the more formal classrooms, from the traditional people, for bilingual children. Moreover, the Open Corridor Program Advisors were the only people in our district who understood developmental psychology and the role of concrete experiences in child development and had a feeling for what children are like and how children develop and grow. So that it wasn't as if we had choices. To us, at the time, there seemed to be one choice. The alternative was failure. All that has changed, there are varieties of teaching styles in those classes, there's variety in teaching styles in the open classes. We have better trained people. There are new staff members. The environment is quite different from what it was in 1970. Three years have brought a lot of changes. We have a much more humane environment. We've also developed support outside of the school. Something that doesn't support what we're doing is the fact that our neighborhood is very transient. I estimate that in the last one and a half years some 70 percent of our parents and kids have been new to our school. Two years before, that wasn't so. People are moving back to the city, apartments are being cut up, hotels in the area are taking in a lot of families living on public assistance, there are new housing projects on Columbus and Amsterdam Avenues.

We are very much affected by public policy in a lot of areas other than education. Decontrolling or increasing rents can affect our pupil population quite frankly. All these things that contribute to or detract from transientness affect our program. We have to know more children very quickly over a shorter period of time. In simplistic terms, we don't have a neighborhood community. That's one of

the problems.

This is a West Side community, and we are more hooked into the West Side than our immediate neighborhood. The area's congresswoman Bella Abzug used our school to present the finalists of her essay writing contest on the urban city. We have people coming in from all over the place. Of course there is an advantage to being that kind of school. Being so attractive to so many people, it assures us of having no loss of teachers. But the disadvantage is that it precludes the typical community involvement that is so important, for one thing, to bilingual education.

Many of the large 15-story, 20-story apartment houses right on our block have few or any children of elementary school age. The people who live there are working people, single people, older people whose kids have grown up and moved away. They, in turn, don't want to leave these fantastic apartments because they are rent-controlled. For the purposes of integration we have to reach all the way up to 101st Street right opposite another public school to draw kids. So where the local community is, is hard to define. In the past we had a certain stability in the school population from middle-income housing complexes on Amsterdam Avenue, but now that has been undone by rent increases and city pressure on Mitchell-Lama housing. Once again, we're becoming relatively unstable and that creates a whole new thing because we have to then train parents and children around our goals and objectives: open education, bilingual education, humane education.

Despite the transientness of our neighborhood we see some things happening here, however. Because of the transientness, we could cop out and say, "Well, we can't have things happening here because we don't know who the kids are. They're here too few years. And you've got to give us more time." A lot of schools use that excuse. But we are showing results with the population we have even though we're becoming as unstable as many of the schools in New York City. We're trying to deal with the children as they come -- at various levels of skills, not reading, whatever. For us, it is more important to have stability in the school if there is none in the general environment. And you create that stability by opening up the structure and not making it rigid. You do it by creating a structure that has flexibility and some give to it. In a way we've just come into this understanding. When I first came here, it was generally assumed that this was a fixed neighborhood. Now we see that this wasn't so. We were working towards a more open, a more flexible school for different goals and objectives. Now it seems to be very necessary to be open and flexible just for some of the basic educational things we are doing in our school.

How did I use my authority to support the bilingual program? Well, first of all, and obviously, through the hiring of personnel. We have people from every conceivable background on our staff. We have Mexican Americans, we have an African staff member who is fluent in five languages, we have classroom paraprofessionals who come from Cuba, Ecuador, Puerto Rico, we have a school aide from the Dominican Republic. The importance of this is that the children are able to identify with these adults in terms of their own heritage and their own cultures. It's an environment that encourages an openness about one's heritage, as well as respect for the others, for differences -- but not simply as a matter of dry principle but as a living practice. Our Spanish-speaking children are also encouraged to share with the majority groups in the school -- the

monolingual kids, and vice versa. There is song-sharing, visits, Spanish-speaking children in the bilingual program learning English by going into other classes, children in monolingual classes going into bilingual classes and learning Spanish as a foreign language. There's a lot of incidental as well as formal instruction involved in our bilingual effort. We also have bilingual parents -- a group within our parent association -- who function within this context. And they all become integrated within our open-ended structure.

Another way I can use my authority in support of the program is by using services and Title I money in ways that will have the greatest impact on the children in the program. If people are drawing money from us in our school, such as paraprofessionals, teachers, teacher aides, the Advisory program, then some of the services that they perform have to be direct services for children. So I might say to a teacher or to an Advisor or to one of the people from the Teachers and Writers Collaborative, "Hey, in terms of our planning, let's work a little bit with this class, with these kids, in this situation; let's take a look at these six kids in a particular classroom setting, so that we can assess the impact of the monies." A specific example of this is the work of the Teachers and Writers Collaborative. We brought them into the school with Title I money, and asked them to work with the bilingual class. They've just come out with a beautiful book of children's writing -- in English. The children wrote it in Spanish and then translated it into English themselves -- which indicates that as they got more fluent in Spanish they were more able to master and dominate English, to function in that area. We like the book a lot. We had an author's party; the class was there, and the parents used our complex video equipment to tape the event. So the bilingual parents have become video tape technicians, and their kids have become creative writers -- in a bilingual setting. And we have a book of poetry to be used by all our classes.

This is part of the process we've been going through during the last three years. Nor could any of it have happened if we hadn't gone through the process. This includes the establishment of relationships, people being supportive of each other, learning how to use libraries, learning how to use museums, developing materials, making contacts with publishers of Spanish-language materials, working within the fabric of the school, sharing resources, working together.

A Puerto Rican teacher who has a license -- and there are very few in the system -- got into that job because he was successful in English. He got into that job because he was assimilated. I was a successful teacher in a classroom setting. But there was no support or encouragement -- nor would I even dream of it -- for teaching the kids in Spanish. I might teach them a little conversational Spanish, and talk to parents in Spanish -- but nothing else. For a Puerto Rican teacher or a Hispanic teacher who arrived by passing tests in English and going through a system of education where they succeeded in English -- it would be virtually impossible to work in a bilingual classroom. They didn't get their B.A. or their M.A., or for that matter any reward, for speaking Spanish. The schools have had bilingual teachers in school-community relations jobs, but their job descriptions specified working primarily with parents and staff members, not with children. So there would be no true reward for that teacher working in Spanish with children. Moreover, public policy discouraged it,

even though it was legally possible to do. Actually the law is ambiguous on the matter. It never said you must teach only in English. But then it never said you must teach in Spanish or another language. What the law does say is that if a child has not received any bilingual instruction and is 10 years old, you can give him three years of it. That's the law in New York State. Nor does it say how many children you have to have, whether it's 50 percent or 75 percent of the school or district or whatever. So the State law has been very minimal. It did not create the possibilities for a continuous bilingual program stretching from kindergarten all the way through junior high school. But that's obviously the next step. There is a move now to amend the State law to make it possible to have six years of bilingual instruction because children are coming into the school system on every entry level.

For the first time last year, under Chancellor Scribner, tax levied monies were allocated for bilingual education. This year the amount is $14 million. And since the money comes through the Central Board, and is shared out on a per capita basis, the districts have to have true bilingual programs. They can't have an English as a Second Language program and no Spanish instruction. They can no longer set up a class they call "bilingual" only to use it as a dumping class, or a junior guidance situation, or a CRMD situation, or you name it. They have to come up with an authentic bilingual program. In addition, federal funding of bilingual education has moved up. There are now 22 bilingual education programs in existence in the city and my guess is that it will move up to about 30 next year.

Observing at P.S. 75

Vera John

When I first arrived at the school, I met with the principal and some of his staff. They were engaged in an informal conference, affected by the principal's attempts to keep a very young kitten from escaping from his arms. He took us to one of the bilingual classes and as children came to ask him about the kitten, he told them that she belonged to the school and he was trying to find out which of the classes wanted to adopt her. When asked by one of the children, "What is the name of the kitten?" he hesitated for a moment and then said, "Emily Dickinson." Though it was a dark and rainy day, I felt good about the atmosphere inside the school.

TWO-WAY BILINGUAL EXPERIENCES

In this school, a number of concerns prevalent among bilingual educators are being dealt with effectively. As the school has children from a variety of ethnic and linguistic

Vera John, who has been a visiting consultant to the Workshop Center for the last two years, is professor of Psychology and Educational Foundations at the University of New Mexico. She wrote this memo after a visit to P.S. 75 early last spring.

backgrounds, they are moving toward utilizing this diversity in a productive way. Children who are Spanish-English bilinguals are tutoring monolingual children. Signs announcing school events are written clearly in two languages, which is important to both the bilingual and monolingual groups as visible reminders of the vitality of the two languages. The methods used in some classrooms to strengthen the weaker language of some pupils is experience-oriented. This is particularly striking in the classroom of two young teachers who have chosen to learn from the children's own interests when teaching them. This, too, is the classroom in which two-way bilingualism is particularly successful. (The bilingual coordinator seems to work well with all the teachers who share most fully with her a particular approach to learning, and her willingness to work just as hard with other teachers whose styles differ from her own preference.

STYLES OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

There is indeed a broad range of variations in the way in which each teacher implements an open or a structured concept of classroom organization. In one class, although much time is spent in teacher-directed activities, a number of students found ways of engaging in independent projects. This was a class of older children in which very exciting work was carried out in map-making and the study of anatomy. The work of these students could become the basis of supplying much needed materials in Spanish for the upper grades.

In other classes, teachers were exhibiting a high degree of imagination in implementing informal and experience-based learning. Though they did not speak of their choice of using visual and spatial representations as an important focus for cognitive growth, I was struck by the way in which map-making and collages charted the growth in conceptualization of second grade children who started in the fall with a simple representation of their immediate neighborhood and are now working on a major construction of all five boroughs in New York City. In this latter effort, they are dealing with problems of physics, social studies and geography. To me, the most interesting aspect of this effort was that the teacher kept the earlier group efforts in her crowded closet so that she, the children, and parents, as well as "outside evaluators" could clearly *see* the nature of the children's intellectual growth during the year.

There are some bilingual classrooms in which the combined style of teachers and children emerge as a more verbal one. It seems to me (and this is a point which I emphasized during my meeting with the teachers) that it should be possible to complement one classroom's strength with that of another. Short dramatic presentations by one classroom can be linked with the construction activities of another.

In such a way, each teacher would feel more comfortable with her/his particular area of strength and feel less threatened by the visible achievements of a colleague. It is particularly difficult in innovative programs to feel satisfied with one's own and individual efforts. These teachers seemed relieved when I spoke of the impressive work I have observed and of the possibility that they could view each other in a complementary rather than a competitive manner.

ORAL AND WRITTEN APPROACHES

I heard an easy switching from English to Spanish and vice versa in many of the classrooms. Teachers have a good understanding of how to make the two languages co-exist; how to remind children at times to function in one or the other language; and how, as mentioned above, to use the children's own competencies as a resource for an effective bilingual classroom.

The same equality of representation of the two languages is not found in terms of written materials. The teachers are familiar with the major resources available for bilingual classrooms, such as the Materials Acquisition Project in San Diego, and their evaluation of some of these materials have been published. But there is a serious shortage of written materials in three areas: (a) a sufficient quantity and diversity of reading materials which have a strong appeal to the children; (b) reading materials which deal with the actual experiences of the urban, Puerto Rican child; and (c) a general shortage of materials for third, fourth and fifth grade bilingual children.

(a) A highly popular reading series consists of small, paperbound books of stories. These are fast to read and seem to appeal to the children in the lower grades, who are independent readers. But the children are already quite familiar with the content of these books. I realized that though educators understand the importance of establishing a match between children's experiences and their reading matter (see "b"), the physical format of written materials is equally important, particularly in classrooms where there is a broad range of reading levels and language dominance present. In making recommendations to publishers and in working with teachers who are putting out their own reading materials, these issues of format and readability should be emphasized as they are especially significant in informal classrooms.

(b) There was unanimous agreement that the books which were available to the children failed to reflect the realities of life in the big city; nor did they depict the experiences of frequent travel between the mainland and the island, so common to many Puerto Rican children. The teachers are doing a fine job in using newspaper articles, maps, magazine pictures, historical series, and homemade cookbooks to fill this gap through their own efforts. Indeed, I have never seen a bilingual school in which teachers exhibited such a high degree of inventiveness and commitment in creating culturally relevant materials with the students. (This includes children from other Caribbean islands, and South America, as well as from Puerto Rico.) One minor criticism is that the interests of boys may not be as fully represented in the collages as that of girls.

However, even this extensive effort on the part of the teaching staff cannot fully compensate for the lack of commercially produced materials. It was my suggestion that the District 5 teachers apply for Workshop funds akin to those held by Mobilization for Youth in the early days of the War on Poverty, whereby teachers and writers, working together, produce new and relevant materials. Dolores Gonzalez of the University of New Mexico has prepared a manual for the construction of readers, based upon her experience in writing such a series for first and second graders in

New Mexico. This is available from the University of New Mexico Press and should be of great help to the teachers at P.S. 75. In contrast with classrooms in the Southwest, I felt that music was well used in some of the classes; but, here, too, a lot more could be done with music as a crucial focus for the development of bicultural and bilingual children.

In a conversation with Miriam Colon, the director of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theater, it became clear that she and her group may be able to help strengthen bilingual education at the elementary level, as they have already done considerable work with and for high school and college students.

(c) The most acutely felt need in terms of materials is at the third, fourth, and fifth grade levels. It is in these classrooms that the teachers are confronted with the combined pressures of the influx of many children who have been educated in structured settings either abroad or in other schools and the lack of readily available, individualized, and interesting curriculum materials in Spanish. In learning physiology, students used a three-dimensional model, anatomy textbooks, and their own curiosity to create bilingual materials in their own notebooks. P.S. 75 may need to rely more systematically upon these and similar efforts on the part of students as a basis for a bilingual resource room. In addition, teachers may need to become involved to a greater extent in screening and purchasing materials from abroad and from the Southwest, so that they can complement their own resources more adequately. For instance, Encyclopedia Britannica has a number of movies with a Spanish soundtrack which they have prepared for export; some of these films may be of use in the upper classrooms, once they have been screened by a committee of teachers.

Although bilingual teachers from different parts of the country have national meetings and publications in which they can share their experiences, bilingual children do not have such opportunities. Students in bilingual classrooms need more chances for contact with each other. It ought to be possible to develop mineographed newsletters put out by the children themselves and more opportunities to correspond in Spanish with students in the Southwest and California. These kinds of efforts would make the written expression of their native language a medium of greater personal satisfaction and use.

Crescencia

This is something that when I recall it makes me very happy because I remember the past when we were growing up. It was something very beautiful and healthy. I remember that when I was growing up my father dedicated himself to working with ox carts. They put two oxen like this, then two more, then in the middle the harness. The trunk is what goes close to the cart and then in front two more oxen, they called this a fourth. In those days there weren't any roads only mud. This is what my father dedicated himself to, to working on this plantation, that was called "La Josefina". We lived between "La Josefina" and San Patricio. Then my mother in order to help my father with the children made lunches in the house. They were superb lunches with sweet potatoes, yame, yautia, codfish, carne del morte, green bananas and so forth. One day she made one thing, the other day another. For these lunches all she was given was 12 cents. But this helped. My mother made some baskets that were called batea. She put the lunches in this basket, put the basket on her head and had to walk from about here (6th street) to 13th street, where the men were cutting sugar cane. She took all those lunches, about 40 or 50, in order to help my father with the money she made. My brothers, the older sons walked the oxen, using a long stick that had a nail on the front end. They called this a "garocha". They used this to walk the oxen so that they would walk faster. At other times they used something that is also known here, a whip. My father took the sugar cane to that place where the train stopped, "el desvio." There were some men there to take the sugar cane and put it into the train cars which would take it to the plantation where it was ground down. This was later because before they took it in the ox carts. My father when he came back from the plantation, somewhat of a slave, would come to plant seeds. He planted sweet potatoes, yautia, plantains, squash, beans, frijoles, petit pois, all those seeds. These seeds were planted by father, mother and us. When the vegetables grew, he took them and hung them up, he tied them up until they dried up. Then he would take out the seeds, usually done with beans. Part of what was harvested was for the owner of the plantation and the other part was for us. We had hens and chickens and turkey. We would go walking through the grass and everywhere we would find a nest with 15 or 30 eggs. There were times when we found 100 eggs in one search. When my father had the day off he would spend it planting, planting and planting. My father would kill the big pigs, then he would take black pepper, oregano, garlic, crush it all together

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The following reminiscence is excerpted from The Fourth Street 1 *(Winter 1973), a bilingual magazine published on the Lower East Side by a group of young residents. The magazine is recognized by the Community School Board of District #1 as educational material.*

and use it to salt the meat very well. The meat was hung up on a rope and left to dry. When you took a piece of this meat it looked like it was cooked, it was very crisp. We would take a piece of this meat, put some charcoal in the fire and roast it.

We would take a piece of pipe (made out of corn stalk) and an *oyeho* (the dried up leaf from a banana plant) and weave them together. We wove it and wove it until we made a receptacle for the milk. The cups used to drink the milk were made out of coconut shells. We drank the milk straight from the cow. The milk was never spoiled because the cows were milked every day. Yes this was the life of the past, a healthy and good life. There weren't too many luxuries or money. Rather, it seemed like there wasn't any money, but there was. You could go to the poorest home in Puerto Rico — the poorest ones were those who had a long ranchlike house. This house had no floor; for the floor they had only earth. Well you entered this home and saw that the family's clothing was very clean and well ironed. The beds were made from sticks. They placed a stick at the top for the headboard and one at the foot, then two more sticks were placed on the sides. Then you took many small sticks, placed them side to side lengthwise until you made something that looked like a raft. You made a mattress out of palm leaves or banana plant leaves that had the same width as the bed and placed it on top.

For light they used a lamp (handmade). You took an empty tin can, that had contained evaporated milk or condensed milk, and you made a cover for it. You filled the can with koresene and put the cover on it. Then you would take the cover and make a wick for it. This wick was made from an old shirt or a rag. This was the lamp. It made a great deal of smoke and turned everything black but it lit the house. Even though the lamp made so much smoke no one was blind and in those days almost no one got a cold. Everyone walked around barefoot and there weren't as many illnesses as there are now. Now there is a great deal of meat and other foods but what good is it if it's not healthy. Before what you ate was wholesome, healthy food that helped a person. There wasn't a threat that you couldn't step here or there barefoot because something would get inside of you. There was no such thing. But now, now you can't walk barefoot because you can catch this kind of infection or the other. Before people planted their own rice which they called the rice of the land. You cooked this rice and ate it, it had all the nutrition that you needed and that's why the people were stronger in the past. They didn't dress well, didn't have any shoes. But they had the necessary things and a little bit of tranquility.

Interview by Elsa Gonzales, translation by Marta Rodriguez.

Learning to read in a bilingual context

Ruth Adams
Lillian Lerner

In terms of its relationship to the process of learning to read, bilingual education means that a young child who enters school speaking primarily a language other than English or the dominant language of instruction in the school, is first taught to read in his own language. Though he learns to speak English as a second language, he is not delayed in his total learning of school curricula while he learns the new language. He learns to read in Spanish or whatever is his first language and also does much of his other learning in that language until his development in terms of English vocabulary concepts and understanding of larger language structure enables him to learn in both languages. The purpose of school is learning; the language is merely a vehicle.

ADVANTAGES OF THIS APPROACH

1. In the past, the curricular emphasis in our schools focused on the notion of "the melting pot." All differences were to be fused, all peoples were to be made into "Americans." Yet, we remain a pluralistic society, in search, still, of smoother intercultural relationships. Today we are even more aware of the connection between school success, economic security, and opportunities for participating meaningfully in the society than in the past. But we have also learned that such school success must have a firm foundation, a good beginning. For young children just beginning school, a smooth transition between home and school and from oral language to the mastery of written language is essential.

2. There are as many ways to teach reading as there are children. No single method can provide for all variances in the needs of any group of children. Indeed, good teachers have always tried to use many different ways to help children develop skills in the highly complex act of associating printed symbols with their sounds and meanings. One factor, however, is common to children at the "learning to read age." They have spent four or five years developing oral language patterns and listening to the oral language patterns of their families and friends. How can we help a child to rediscover these oral language patterns in their printed forms? Specifically how do we do this with the child whose four or five years were spent internaliz-

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ing patterns in one language and who is then expected to read in another language?

The learning to read process is based on the mastery of that relationship of oral to written language, of the spoken word to its graphic counterpart. In order to master this process, the child must have opportunities to use his developing powers of visual and auditory perception as well as his growing mastery of spoken language. He must have opportunities through activities which elicit his full participation and interest. Such activities and curricular experiences, in the language which he speaks and deals with easily, create the needed opportunities. The abilities (that are needed in order to learn how to read) *themselves* grow and can be used in a multitude of situations.

3. Bilingual education is thus also an alternative solution to perceptual training which advocates practice on figures, dots, or lines. Reading in one's first language enables one to practice by learning in a language that one uses without struggle. It is the principle of transfer of training of meaningful wholes. (Most reading instructional systems do not use children's own language as a source. Beginning programs impose other languages often based on word lists standardized on populations many years ago on the basis of "frequency of use." These were the only words taught as "reading words" in the readers for many years. Even on the so-called "experience charts" that preceded the readers, the words the teachers stressed and "fed in" were those to be met later in basal readers. Teachers who did this, however, were always surprised to note that the children remembered their own words that they dictated to her, not the ones that she "fed in" to the chart.) Jeanne Chall reported in a study she made in 1965 that "even though perceptual training raises reading performance in the first two years, an early language emphasis produces greater positive results on reading in the upper grades" (when comprehension is measured to a greater extent). This approach is an early language approach in the child's own language.

Dr. Chall also stated in the same section of her book that her research (emphasizing "results in terms of reading for meaning") was considered valid only up through the third grade. What are the results with children for whom English is not a first language? What are the results for them and others in upper grades? Do the children who learned to read at the beginning with a heavy "code-breaking emphasis" still excel?

Eric Lenneberg's research may be helpful here. He is a biologist as well as a linguist. His findings suggest that a level of maturation of the functioning of the brain *is* necessary before the environment can help the child to use his language. But this stage, once reached, is outgrown by the early teens — the junior high school years. "The brain, then," he finds, "behaves as though it had become set in its ways and basic language skills not acquired by that time ... remain deficient for life." During early years the child acquires language skills more naturally and easily because of the flexibility of brain functioning. How much of this valuable time should the child who is trying to become bilingual spend decoding?

What then of meanings? What of the children who come to school either without that strong language "bank" or who come from homes in which another language is spoken? Yes, what of the child who has internalized a language

with a different set of meanings and a different set of grammatical structures?

* * *

With normal health and such language growth as described earlier as a basis, and with maturation of the perceptual and integrative abilities necessary to do the "decoding", a child should begin to learn to read. He should begin easily if the teaching is in the language which he has made his own and if that language is made the basis of his instruction.

Worth mentioning here, in regard to the above, is Sylvia Ashton Warner's "key word method." Her book, *Teacher*, is the personal account of a teacher in New Zealand. In this inspiring book, Mrs. Ashton Warner describes her method of teaching. Her concept of Organic Reading is not new, as she herself admits; but, somehow, coupled with her enthusiasm and dedication, she has used it to create an overwhelming interest and zeal for reading on the part of her children. This is what is crucial for the concept of reading that we are advocating. Organic Reading draws upon the experiences of the children themselves. The author writes intensely of reading as a "living" activity. "First words," she says, "must have intense meaning for a child. They must be part of his being."

As expressed by Rosa Inclan, director of bilingual programs in Dade County, Florida, language skills and abilities do transfer from one language to another. It seems absurd, therefore, Mrs. Inclan writes, "to ignore the vast potential that the Spanish-speaking, literate child brings with him into the English classroom. It is a pedagogical crime still being perpetrated in too many schools in the United States to allow a child's original language ability to deteriorate while stubbornly insisting on building a second language from scratch, to ignore the wealth of listening-speaking experiences that should lay the groundwork upon which to structure strong reading and writing abilities, and to launch the monumental task of building from the bare ground as if on a tabula rasa, with nothing on which to build. This can be even more absurd if there is the intention to try to build up Spanish competency later on, perhaps at the seventh or ninth grade level."

Taking all of the foregoing into account, therefore, two powerful reasons for using the child's language and words when teaching him to read suggest themselves: one, is developmental; the other is more dynamic -- it is motivational. It is the difference between working *on* a puzzle and working *with* a human -- one waits to be assembled; the other joins in the process.

* * *

Developing expressive language in the classroom (in Spanish and English) is certainly as significant for the bilingual child as it is for English-speaking children, for it provides the child with opportunities to verbalize the language processes he has internalized, all of which contribute to the comprehension skills needed for reading and the communication process as a whole. Freely expressed, language is a monitoring feedback for the teacher, signaling the degree of conceptualization, the acquisition of vocabulary concepts, and the interrelationship of ideas.

For the bilingual child, encouraging spontaneous verbalization in the native and the second language serves additional functions, because it endows the child with status in the pluralistic society that, in fact, frequently does not bestow approval on the foreign languages and accents that are associated with some minority groups. By encouraging language

expression, and using both languages herself, the teacher is communicating acceptance, she is saying, "What you have to say is important to me in both of your languages."

Fashioning a classroom rich in opportunities to develop language concepts is necessary for all youngsters, but the bilingual child in particular should be surrounded by such an atmosphere in order for him to have ample opportunity to develop these language constructs first in his native language, where possible, and then in the second language, which is bridged through the native language. Animals, daily events, life, and death should be sources for interactive language. The room must be arranged in a way that will facilitate both the development of experiential learning and the development of specific reading skills. There should be activity centers but also there must be added places where the child can have more informal types of experiences. What is important is that the conceptual framework be nurtured rather than neglected because of an overemphasis on formal structured language which requires the child to "say it in English." The formal English structure patterns may be useful in limited degree, but they should not usurp the place of experiential language in the native language first and then English which establishes vocabulary concepts, knowledge of one's self, the community, and the world around the child.

Aaron V. Cicourel and Robert J. Boese, in "Sign Language Acquisition and the Teaching of Deaf Children," (Functions of Language In The Classroom, edited by Courtney B. Cazden, Vera P. John, Dell Hymes, Teachers College Press, 1972) make a fascinating case for the use of the native language as the language of instruction. They state that deaf children born either to deaf or hearing parents and hearing children born to deaf parents first learn to communicate with their parents through sign language. When these children enter school they are taught via the "oral method" (reading lips, speaking, and then reading and writing syntactically), which becomes a second language to these children. The authors contend that these children rarely become as fluent in the oral language as they are in the sign language, and invariably revert to sign language when they are among "their own," users of sign language. The schools should acknowledge the sign language and use it as a gradual introduction to the second language, the oral language, rather than negating an entire world of learning that already exists. The authors add, "More obviously, the arguments apply to the children of minority groups whose first language or dialect must be recognized and accepted in school."

Some history

Stan Steiner

The year Cristobal Colon set sail for the Americas, the Spanish scholar Antonio de Nebrija completed work on his Grammatica, *the first modern grammar of the Spanish language. He proudly presented his work to Queen Isabella.*

"What is it for?" the Queen asked.

"Your majesty," replied the Bishop of Avila, who had accompanied the scholar, "language is the perfect instrument of empire."

The teacher picked up "The Primer" in English. He was saddened at the thought of "teaching English in English," but don Peyo was tired of fighting with his superviser. And so he said to his class, "Well, children, we are goin' to talk in Englis' today." He opened "The Primer" to a picture of a strutting cock. "Now, you know, *'gallo'* is 'cock' in English, in American," he began. "Read with me: 'The cock says *cockadoodledoo.*' " The teacher called on Tellito: "How does the crock crow in English?"

"I don't know, don Peyo," the boy replied.

"But look, boy, you've just read it," snapped the teacher.

"No," the boy said.

"Look, dummy, the cock crows *cookadoodledoo,*" the teacher repeated.

"Don Peyo, that must be the song of the American rooster," the boy said apologetically. "The cock at home sings *'Cocoroco.'* "

In spite of himself the teacher laughed loudly. So did the class. The laughter frightened the *Camaquey* cock in the schoolyard, which strutted about flapping its luminous wings and crowing, *"Cocoroco"!*

The linguistic contest of the cocks was related by the Puerto Rican writer Aberlardo Diaz Alfaro in his delightful tale "Peyo Merce Teaches English." After seventy-years of the "Americanization" of the island, it seemed, the cocks still crowed in that uniquely melodious Puerto Rican "Spanish" of the *jibaro.* For it took hundreds of years to unlearn a language, and to forget a culture. Even for a cock.

But the de-education of a child could be achieved in the lifetime of a child. Unlike a cock, a child could be taught to forget who he was as easily as he could be taught a different language.

On the island the de-education of the children began on a tropical winter day in February, 1901. It was the 169th birthday of *"Jorge Washindon."* The schoolchildren of San Juan, more than twenty thousand of them, were dressed in red, white, and blue shirts, pants, and dresses, and, waving little American flags, were marched down the gracious old Avenida Ponce de Leon, then lined with leisurely Spanish colonial houses, beneath the royal palms by the sea, chanting a song they had been forced to memorize, in a language they did not understand, with words whose meanings they did not

know:

> America, America,
> God shed His grace
> on thee . . . .

In the plaza of every city on the island the schoolchildren were marched through the streets that day by their American teachers. Later that year, on June 14, the children were marched into the streets again, this time to celebrate Flag Day. Once again, "Each of thousands of pupils carried a flag, and many were costumed in the national colors (of America)," reported the Commissioner of Education Dr. G.G. Baumbaugh. "It was a field day of American patriotism," he said with pride.

All the schools began the day with the children saluting the American flag. They then sang uncomprehendingly, by rote and in English, "America," "Hail, Columbia," "The Star-Spangled Banner" and other patriotic songs. By 1900 the schools had already been named in honor of Washington, Lafayette, Franklin, Jefferson, Jackson, Adams, Lincoln, Grant, McKinley, Longfellow, Prescott, Webster, Hamilton, Garfield, Horace Mann, and Peabody, the Commissioner reported. Everywhere the Spanish names were obliterated. The speaking of Spanish was forbidden in the classrooms. English was the new "instrument of the empire."

In one teachers' manual on *The Teaching of English in the Primary Grades of Puerto Rico,* issued by the Department of Elementary Education of the University years ago, teachers were told: "Each morning the teacher should greet the children with, 'Good Morning.' She should not be disturbed if at first the children do nothing but look at her. She should *not* tell them in Spanish what *Good Morning* means. She simply repeats 'Good Morning' each morning until the children hear the expression so many times that they begin to respond more or less *unconsciously.*" But under no circumstances was the teacher to teach in Spanish, use a Spanish word or phrase, or permit the child to speak in Spanish.

Nursery rhymes were to be recited over and over, because the children who did not understand the English words would remember the rhythms. The picture books recommended for children in kindergarten and first grade were *Little Black Sambo, Mother Goose,* and *The Story of the Three Bears:*

> We played the Three Bears.
> Luis was the Father Bear.
> Blanca was the Mother Bear.
> Juanito was the Baby Bear.
> Maria was Goldilocks.

Of course, there were no bears in Puerto Rico. It was the English, not the story, that mattered, as "Here We Go Round the Mulberry Bush" became "Here We Go Round the Mango Tree." The educational aim was the de-education of the children, so that they would unlearn the nursery rhymes of the island, forget its folklore and culture, and become illiterate in the language of their fathers.

"The Spanish language is precious to these people. All their history, and their traditions, and their civilization are bound to it," Commissioner Baumbaugh had written. If the island was to be "Americanized," it was necessary for the Spanish language to be eliminated. "The logic of the situation is that the English language will become finally universal," he said.

One of the first commissioners of education, Dr. Victor S. Clark, in 1899, had stated bluntly that the

"great mass" of "Puerto Ricans are as yet passive and plastic," and "their ideals are in our hands to create and mold." To do this would not be difficult, he thought, "if the schools were made American." Dr. Samuel McCune Lindsay of Columbia University, who became Commissioner of Education in 1902, was even more succinct: "Colonization carried forward by the armies of peace, whose outposts and garrisons are the public schools of the advancing nations." The aim of the de-education was to "assimilate" the island, said Dr. Ricardo Alegria, the director of the Institute of Puerto Rican Culture, to prepare transforming "Puerto Rico (into) another New Mexico or Arizona. And the schools were the instrument of that cultural assimilation."

* * *

The policy was a failure. In 1920, when Henry Franck wrote *Roaming Through the West Indies*, he noted with dismay, "English is little spoken in Porto Rico." He was "surprised" because he was "old enough to remember what a splurge we made in swamping the island with American teachers soon after we took over." (At the time, Commissioner Baumbaugh had sardonically said: "None of the (these teachers) knew Spanish, and some of them knew little English.") There had been "no progress made in teaching Porto Rico English in twenty years of American rule," Franck complained. If you stepped "out of one of the three principal hotels of the capital you are in a foreign country."

Governor Roosevelt voiced the same complaint in the 1930s. "When we arrived in Puerto Rico practically no one spoke English. Spanish was the language of the island." He "deliberately" set out "to change this and to make Puerto Rico English speaking." Some thought this policy was an "attempt to stamp out local customs and culture, and substitute English for Spanish," but that was "ridiculous," he said, for the United States, "at considerable sacrifice and expense," was seeking to reshape the island into "a real Pan-American center of culture, where Cervantes and Shakespeare, so to speak, sat side by side." If such was his policy, it to failed.

"In Puerto Rico the child comes to school with little or no knowledge of the English language," the teachers' manual of 1935 declared. That is still true of most of the children in 1973. Spanish is now, as it was then, the "language of the island." In the mid-1950s Spanish was brought back into the schools, by the Puerto Rican government, as the language of instruction.

Paradoxically, as the schools on the island were abandoning the policy of enforced elimination of Spanish, and planned de-education, as an abysmal failure in education, the schools on the mainland were adopting the discredited and discarded policy for the hundreds of thousands of *barrio* children whose parents had been enticed to the United States in the 1950s. It was historically an old instance of a colonial policy, abandoned in the colonies, only to be embraced by the mother country. In school after school the old immigrant imperative was heard: "This is America! Speak English!"

In those years of de-education a social worker was said to have asked a little *barrio* child to describe how he felt in the schools of the city. The folklore of the *barrio* has often retold his sad reply. He was, said the little child: "Alien in two lands, and illiterate in two languages!"

In his "Broken English Dream," the young *barrio* poet Pedro Pietri had written:

> To the united states we came--
> to learn how to mispell our name...
> to fill out welfare applications—
> to graduate from school without
> an education . . .

From The Islands *(Harper & Row, 1974)*

> The lack of opportunity to hear and see one's native language in many forms, to see it on street signs, for example, is to be deprived of the many informal learning experiences that we so deeply count on when we are talking about first language: the radio, television, seeing it all over, hearing it from a great variety of speakers, all these things contribute to the fully developing confidence of the speaker. If you hear your language in only one setting, and under certain circumstances ("At home, you can speak Spanish, but on the elevator or on the bus, you can't"), then you begin to think, "Perhaps I should be quiet or perhaps I should communicate non-verbally." These attitudes have more to do with the eventual development of bilingual confidence than many of the instructional strategies that we now concern ourselves with.
>
> *Vera John, at the Workshop Center*

En espanol

These poems, translated into the Spanish by Pilar Delago, are excerpted from Spicy Meatball, Number Five, *which is written and collated by the students of P.S. 75, Manhattan, with the help of the Teachers and Writers Collaborative.*

A mi me recuerda cuando yo estaba en Ecuador y estaba en la escuela y que cuando saliamos de'la escuela habia un senor tocando la guitarra y me dio mucha pena porque el estaba sucio y tenia los pantalones sucios y rotos y estaba sin camisa y por eso me dio pena.

I remember when I was in Ecuador and I was in school and when we came out of school there was a man playing the guitar and it gave me much pain because he was dirty and he had pants that were dirty and torn and he was without a shirt and for this gave me much pain.

Moises Fuentes

Las personas oyen la musica En el concierto de Musica. Las personas dicen que es una buena musica que nos alegra. Otra persona dijo: Me gusta la musica intrumental. Y las personas siguen oyendo la musica. Y hay ninos que salen y entran a comprar dulces. Sigue llegando la gente y ya no se puede caminar. Ya son las 12:00 de la noche. A la gente le da sueno y se va para su casa Se duermen y al otro dia se levantan a las 6:00 A.M. para ir a su trabajo y los ninos a las escuela.

The people hear the music. In the Music concert. The people say that it is a good music that makes them happy. Other people say: I like instrumental music. And the people keep on listening to the music. And there are children who go out and come in to buy sweets. The people keep on arriving until you can't walk anymore. It's twelve o'clock midnight. The people get sleepy and go home. They sleep, and the next day they get up at six o'clock in the morning to go to their work and the children to school.

Ricardo Irizarry

Prionsias o'mianain

Eamonn McCann

The connection between culture and language comes through clearly in this excerpt from Eamonn McCann's War and an Irish Town *(Penguin, 1974).*

We learned of the United Irishmen, the Fenian Movement, the Easter rising; of Emmet hanged, and Tone who had cut his throat in his cell to cheat the English executioner; of Connolly who was wounded in the leg and could not stand up so they strapped him to a chair to be shot; snatches from Pearse's speech at the grave of O'Donovan Rossa: "The fools, the fools, the fools, they have left us our Fenian dead ..." There were men in the area who embodied the tradition -- Paddy Shiels, Neil Gillespie, Sean Keenan, Old Republicans who had fought in the past and been jailed and whose suffering represented a continued contribution from our community to the age-old struggle. They were regarded with guilty pride by the great majority as living out too urgently the ideals to which, tacitly, we were all committed. When Paddy Shiels died everyone said that he was a "Great Irishman."

Frankie Meenan was of the same stamp and always resented the fact that he had to speak English to make himself understood in the area. He ran classes in Gaelic for local children in a disused billiards hall in Chamberlain Street. Rows of children, few of whom would ever progress beyond school, would sit reciting in unison, *"Ta me, Ta tu, Ta se, Ta si* -- I am, you are, he is, she is," and wrestling with the intricacies of the vocative case. Women in the street would ask Frankie: "How's he getting on at the Irish?," to which he always replied: "Oh, coming on, coming on." Few ever became fluent, but it was felt right to make the effort. Frankie probably paid for the hire of the hall himself. He bought about thirty hurling sticks once and on Saturday mornings would take a crowd of us up to a field behind the Rosemount School, distribute the sticks and try to teach us the national game. The instructions were shouted in Irish, *"Anois, Buail e, buail e!"* and *"Ach, amadan,* bloody *amadan!"* (Now hit it, hit it! Fool, bloody fool!) when one missed the ball completely for the *n*th time. There were always those who, privately, affected amusement at Frankie's activities, but no one openly denied him respect.

The Irish lessons and the hurling classes ended when Frankie was arrested one night in 1957. It was during the IRA's border campaign. He was coming home when a police car stopped and he was asked his name. He could have said, "Frankie Meenan" but, being what he was, he said, *"Prionsias O'Mianain, ta me ag dul abhaile"* (I am going home), for which piece of bilingual impertinence he was taken to Crumlin Road jail in Belfast and held without trial for seven months.

The bilingual curriculum: what is it?

Sound curriculum planning and development is based upon information regarding three basic elements: the student, his or her immediate community, and the needs of society in general. Information regarding the student is basic to the development of an effective curriculum. By the time children enter school, they already have developed particular skills, abilities, and interests. These must be identified and taken into account if the curriculum is to be successful in motivating the students and generating their interest. Further, by using information concerning students in determining the content and process of the curriculum, the transition from home to school learning can be made easier for the children. The family and community from which the child comes also provide essential information regarding the attitudes, customs, and cultural heritage of the child which the curriculum is obliged to incorporate. And if curriculum is to help make education a means of preparing children to enter the world outside as productive and concerned citizens, it must be based on an accurate assessment of the needs of society and be responsive to those needs.

In short, if curriculum is to be an effective instrument in helping all students develop their potential to the fullest, it must be flexible and broadly based. To what extent has curriculum in the Southwest satisfied this test?

Generally, curriculum has not had the flexibility or been broadly enough based to develop the potential of all students. As one experienced educator has said, "Educational programs are designed and developed for the white Anglo-Saxon, English-speaking, middle-class population. If a child is not a "typical child," if he is not Anglo-Saxon, you develop an incompatability between the characteristics of the learner and the characteristics of the educational program." This incompatability between the Chicano student and the curriculum is most evident in the areas of language and culture.

LANGUAGE EXCLUSION

Oral language is the most basic element of any curriculum. This is especially so in the early years of schooling when children must depend

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This is excerpted from the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights' Mexican American Education Study, Toward Quality Education for Mexican Americans *(February 1974).*

entirely on their ability to communicate orally. The schools of the Southwest, as in other parts of the United States, use English as the dominant language of instruction. Thus, in the formative years, reading and writing skills are developed on the assumption that the child has oral skills in the English language. For Mexican American children, this assumption is often false.

Many Chicano children, by the time they reach school age, have developed a complete language system in Spanish, or, although they may speak some English, their dominant language is Spanish. They are ready to begin learning to read and write. But instead of being encouraged to develop these skills in Spanish and subsequently use them to develop the same skills in English, Chicano children find their language either ignored or prohibited by school authorities.

In response to the Commission's questionnaires, principals in 30 percent of the elementary schools and 40 percent of the secondary schools surveyed in the Southwest admitted to discouraging the use of Spanish in the classroom. Use of Spanish is further discouraged on an unconscious level by school officals. One Southwestern educator expressed the view that: "The actual incidence of discouragement is probably much higher than Commission statistics show. Because the schools have for so long felt that Spanish is a handicap to successful learning, they unconsciously foster unacceptance and resulting discouragement of the speaking of Spanish in school." Not only does this practice fail to build on one of the most basic skills of Chicano students, but it degrades them and impedes their education by its implicit refusal to provide for teaching and learning in Spanish.

A large proportion of Chicano children in the Southwest grow up speaking different dialects of Spanish which vary somewhat in vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation from the so-called "standard" Spanish. Such dialects may incorporate some English vocabulary, old Spanish words which were in common usage during the 17th and 18th centuries, and standard Spanish. Linguists agree that such dialects are not distortions of the standard dialect but companion dialects of the same language. According to one major source: "The speaker of a nonstandard dialect is not "confused" or "wrong" when his speech differs from the standard dialect, but he is actually using a different language system." Schools in the Southwest could assist Chicano children to develop language skills in both standard Spanish and English by accepting and building on their particular dialects of Spanish. Ideally, at the end of such a school experience, Chicano children could be trilingual, making them proficient in standard Spanish, their own dialect of Spanish, as well as in English. However, Chicano dialects are viewed by many school officials in the Southwest as illegitimate or as comprising no language at all. Thus, as a Texas elementary teacher commented:

> The Spanish that these little Mexican kids know is just a poor combination of English and Spanish slang. Actually these kids have no language at all, because they speak bad English and bad Spanish.

Exclusion from the school experience of the Spanish language, whether standard Spanish or another dialect, results in two serious consequences for Chicano students. First, a Chicano child with little or no knowledge of English finds it difficult to function satisfactorily in the

classroom. Second, because language is rooted in and reflects a set of values of a particular group, exclusion of Spanish engenders in Chicano children the feeling that very important aspects of his life--his community and culture--are undesirable.

Some efforts have been made to develop language programs for Chicano students. These programs use a variety of teaching methods to increase English language skills. The most commonly used language programs are English as a Second Language and, to a lesser extent, Bilingual Education.

ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE

English as a Second Language (ESL) is a program designed to teach English language skills within the regular curriculum prescribed for all children. This program attempts to make non-English speaking children proficient in English by providing supplementary instructional sessions in English for a specified time, generally 30 minutes to one hour, during the day. In the ESL program, English is used almost exclusively, even with the youngest children, whether the children understand it or not.

The major problems with ESL for Spanish speaking students in Southwestern schools are the theory underlying the program and its limited purposes. ESL is designed strictly as a transitional language program and contains no culture content relating to the Mexican American community or heritage. The theory behind using only ESL is that a Spanish speaking child can become proficient in English through a brief period of training in English classes and can simultaneously learn course work in that language. Not only does this method fail to build on the Chicano child's language ability in Spanish, but it requires that the child learn a new language well enough to function in that language immediately and for the majority of the day. Further, as one source has stressed: "This method subtly, by minimizing the child's vernacular, places the home language in an inferior, unacceptable position." Though ESL can be effectively used as a component of Bilingual Education, it is not, by itself, an adequate program for teaching English to Chicano children.

BILINGUAL-BICULTURAL EDUCATION

Bilingual-Bicultural Education has been defined as "Instruction in two languages and the use of those two languages as mediums of instruction .... for any part or all of the school curriculum and including study of the history and culture associated with the student's mother tongue. A complete program develops and maintains the children's self-esteem and a legitimate pride in both cultures." An axiom of Bilingual Education is "that the best medium for teaching is the mother tongue of the student." The program develops reading and writing skills in the child's native tongue while simultaneously introducing English language skills. The child's culture becomes an essential component of the entire school experience.

In general, Bilingual-Bicultural Education builds on the child's skills, such as language skills, rather than ignoring or suppressing them. The child's familiar experiences, community, and cultural heritage are incorporated into the educational program, rather than being excluded. Course content is

often presented in Spanish along with free use of Spanish in teaching. As a result, children are able to respond more positvely to a school and an educational program which reflect their own interests, abilities, and community.

Bilingual-Bicultural Education has been implemented only recently in selected districts throughout the country and then only on a modest scale. Many programs in the Southwest are misnamed bilingual-bicultural programs but are actually focused on teaching English and have no course content or a cultural component. Such programs not only distort the concept of what Bilingual-Bicultural Education is but give an inaccurate representation of the number of children being reached by genuine bilingual-bicultural programs. Programs also vary considerably by the number of grade levels involved, program structure, and language dominance of students.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA), as amended, provides under Title VII specifically for Bilingual-Bicultural Education. It stresses the importance of conserving the nation's language resources and advancing the education of all children, regardless of their language. Since 1969, when the program began, Title VII has funded demonstration Bilingual-Bicultural Education projects throughout the country for non-English speaking students of various backgrounds. However, these programs reach only a small percentage of the Chicano children needing them. In 1969, 51 Spanish/English programs, reaching nearly 19,000 children, were funded in school districts throughout the Southwest by the Office of Education under Title VII. By the 1972-73 school year, 123 projects reaching 70,000 children in the area were being funded. Though the number of children in the Southwest being reached by projects funded under Title VII has more than tripled in three years, the 70,000 students in the program appear insignificant in comparison to the estimated 1.6 million Mexican American students in Southwestern schools.

If the federal government has become actively involved in supporting Bilingual Education, the States have not. Of the five Southwestern States, only Texas has made provision for mandatory bilingual programs for Spanish speaking children. Thus, it is left up to the individual school district to decide whether bilingual programs are necessary and should be provided for non-English speaking students. Furthermore, though four of the States have allocated funds for bilingual education, such funds reach only a very small percentage of the students needing the program.

CULTURAL CONTENT IN CURRICULUM

As noted earlier, curriculum is neither neutral nor impartial but reflects value judgments on customs, values, and life styles. Essential to effectuve curriculum is the incorporation of the culture as it manifests itself through the family, community, and background of all students. These represent the elements students are most familiar with and on which their education can be most effectively based. Further, as authorities in the field have pointed out, developing the child's "pride in his cultural heritage will increase his success potential, so that he will better be able to benefit from what the educational system has to offer him."

Culture content in the curriculum is

evident in textbooks used at all grade levels and pertaining to all subject matter. It also can be related in special courses or programs dealing with the culture and history of particular ethnic groups.

TEXTBOOKS

Textbooks provide the basis for much of the curriculum. They are heavily relied upon in the educational program by most teachers. In a survey of elementary and secondary schools conducted by the National Education Association, principals unanimously indicated that the textbook is the focus of curriculum and as such has the greatest effect on what is taught in the classroom.

All textbooks impart value judgments about particular cultures. History texts clearly have the greatest potential for including cultural material, for they record the contributions of a particular people or nation. But texts in all courses include culture content. One educator, after evaluating history textbooks for Chicano culture content, found that:

> The U.S. educational system in part through the textbooks has reinforced a sense of Anglo superiority and degraded the image of Mexican Americans and other ethnic minorities. Content analysis of a dozen popular U.S. history textbooks revealed little in these texts which would specifically contribute to the pride of the young Chicano, but much that could assault his ego and reinforce a concept of Anglo superiority.

As numerous textbook evaluators have noted, little if anything is said about the contributions of Mexicans and Mexican Americans to the development of the Southwest. Indeed, if any comments regarding Chicanos or their heritage are included in textbooks, they are usually negative or distorted in nature.

Literature texts, which purport to compile or describe written works representative of American or European writers, help develop in students an appreciation for written art forms. Few literature texts contain works by Chicano playwrights and poets. Even works by Mexican American authors are rarely in evidence in the literature texts, and students are led to assume that there are no Chicano or Mexican writers or that they are not accomplished enough to be included in a text.

In the elementary grades, the exclusion of familiar figures and situations from reading texts is evident. As one authority pointed out:

> Though much has been said about the "Dick and Jane" readers and the inability of the Chicano child to relate to such characters, the basic readers remain essentially unchanged. At best, Dick and Jane are shaded to appear brown, retaining their Anglo features; more commonly, however, Dick and Jane and the Anglo family continue to be presented as the ideal.
>
> Readers in the intermediate grades as well fail to present Chicano life styles and culture, and by doing so neglect to develop stories around areas of interest and familiarity to the Chicano students.

Even mathematics textbooks carry culture content which ignore Chicanos' skills and knowledge. The teaching

of mathematics involves familiarizing the student with numbers and training him to use those numbers in situations which may be of potential benefit to him. Problem solving should involve characters and situations with which the child most easily identifies. However, most mothematics textbooks present problem solving situations involving only Anglo characters and in settings which are often unfamiliar to Chicano children. Rarely is a situation given which directly relates to the experience of Chicanos growing up in a Chicano home or community. Further, mathematics textbooks and classes rarely refer to Aztec and Mayan contributions to the development of numerical systems and complex forms of mathematics.

Though textbooks are a large part of what is presented in a curriculum, much more goes into the total educational environment. This educational environment includes the physical surroundings of the classroom, such as pictures and displays on the walls and books on the shelves. Other influences are the songs, music and movies used either formally or informally by the school, as well as the field trips sponsored by the school.

The educational environment should reflect the home and community of all groups of children. The Chicano influence on the educational environment of most Southwestern schools is, however, as one authority has expressed it, almost non-existent. Pictures and displays in the classroom fail to show scenes of Chicano family and community life or few, if any, decorations reflective of the Chicano culture. Music and games familiar in Chicano communities are rarely used in the school setting. Finally, field trips generally focus on areas outside of the Chicano community and disregard areas of interest in the barrios.

SINGING

There are certain sounds that you have to produce in learning a new language that are not part and parcel of your old language, and also you need to have repeated experiences in knowing where to put your tongue. But if you have to do this in a situation where you are being looked at and judged, made to feel "did I do it right or wrong," that is really not as useful as when you develop auditory judgment of your own: "Does it sound right?" The sooner you can tell yourself whether you are making sounds the way you wish to, the way other people who speak English may be making them, the more adequately will you be able to do it. One of the best ways of acquiring that judgment is through songs, where you repeat certain lines again and again and then improvise. In singing songs, you are processing the sounds without focusing all the time. The very rhythm of a song carries you, carries the whole production of language; if you don't get the sound down the way you want it this time nobody really hears you because a lot else is going on, but you start feeling it. You start feeling your mouth, your tongue, your teeth making new combinations.

Vera John, at the Workshop Center

Guasabara

Ralph Collazo

Past experience has taught me that there are three main factors in learning: understanding, communicating, and a teacher who tries to understand student's needs. I know this because in my primary years in elementary school I did not understand English, and the first and second grade teachers did absolutely nothing to try and understand my needs. I was just another frustrated child sitting in a classroom staring into space.

In 1951, when my family migrated from Puerto Rico to the United States I was six years old. I can still remember the narrow, old tenement building we came to live in. I can still remember the fear of loneliness I felt when I first entered that building. I remember fighting back tears because people, places, and things I loved were no longer there. I no longer had my grandparents to lean on. I no longer had trees to climb or the mangos and the guavas I used to eat fresh off the trees. I could no longer play in the rain because in my new environment it was not the thing to do. I could no longer use a huge banana tree leaf to slide down a muddy hill. I was deprived of many things I never should have been deprived of -- especially my native language.

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The first few words I learned in English were not profanities that many used in their daily vocabulary but words of rejection. The words I remember the most are "geraraheer" (get out of here), "cherap" (shut-up), and "quajet" (quiet). The first grade classroom environment introduced me to "cherap" and "quajet" in a very confusing way. Any time I spoke Spanish to my friends, the English speaking kids would tell me to shut-up, and the teacher would tell me to keep quiet. I learned that both words meant for me to keep my mouth shut, but I couldn't understand why the teacher used the word quiet and the kids the word shut-up. It was later on in life that I realized that the one who was confusing me was the teacher. She used the word quiet with nearly the same authoritative command as the kids who used the word shut-up.

While I was in the first grade, the teacher separated the class into two groups. The group sitting on the right side, next to the windows, was the group of English speaking kids; the group sitting on the left side, next to the closet, was the group of non-English speaking kids. I happened to be sitting very close to the closet because the only words I knew in English were "cherap" and "quajet" and "geraraheer."

While sitting on the left side of the room, all I can remember doing was drawing pictures. The teacher would give the kids on the left side of the room drawing paper and crayon, and the

kids on the right side would be learning the alphabet, numbers, and simple words.

My sister had been teaching me the Spanish alphabet ever since we lived in Puerto Rico. By the time I came to New York and entered the first grade, I knew the Spanish alphabet by heart. One day when the teacher was singing the alphabet I stopped drawing and listened as she pronounced each letter. I noticed that some of the letters sounded similar to the letters in Spanish. I started looking at the letters of the alphabet which were posted on cards, on top of the blackboard. I started saying the alphabet in Spanish to myself, and I noticed that four letters were missing. That puzzled me, so I continued to look at the alphabet trying to figure out why CH, LL, N, and RR were missing. As I was looking straight up at the alphabet, I heard the teacher scream out my name and say a few words to me. I didn't understand what she said, but I knew what she meant. I quickly looked down at my drawing paper and continued to draw.

Second grade was a more advanced repeat of first grade. I got a chance to open a Dick and Jane reader with the rest of the class, but I was never called upon to read because again, I was on the slow learning side of the class. If only the teachers would have realized I was trying to learn. If only I knew enough English to ask why four letters were missing from the alphabet posted on top of the black board. If only I had bilingual education.

All my life I have been playing "catch up" because of those elementary level fruitless years. I despise them, I regret them, and I hate them just as I hated portions of elementary school education, junior high school education, and high school education.

Today I am a college student and I love it, but I still have a lot of ground to make up. No matter how hard I try, I will never reach the peak I could have reached. If only I had had the proper attention. "If only" is the question of my life.

Language skills seem to be very simple to those who have mastered such skills. It is so natural, so easy for them to listen, talk, read, and write that many tend to forget about the frustrated child who is trying to learn but does not comprehend. These individuals who have mastered the English language should try to recall why in their infancy they began attending to sounds, or their first efforts to speak. They should also try to remember how they learned to read and write. It would be very useful if they could turn back the hands of time to a period of learning frustration in their lives. Perhaps by the experience they have had, they could help children acquire these skills more effectively.

A framework for implementing bilingual education

This list of propositions is the result of an analysis and synthesis of information collected during the study. These propositions also follow the position of the research team with respect to the concept of models in the contextual framework of education. The set is aimed at generating dynamic bilingual education programs that will transform and become transformed as a result of their interaction with reality. The list is far from being exhausted; it only suggests the beginnings of a process:

1. The two most important factors bearing on the effectiveness of bilingual schooling are the multifaceted involvement (representation, participation) of the community and looking at the learner as the point of departure for any curriculum development, teacher training, etc.

2. There must be a concentrated effort to establish an image of the bilingual school as an educational institution where both English and the native language are taught. These schools also have to lose their image as corrective institutions for the socially different.

3. The bilingual school should be seen by the students and their families as an educational institution that facilitates the learning of English to deal with the society at large, as well as learning for conceptual development in the native language, while maintaining and improving the ties between children, their families, and the social groups to which these belong.

4. The image of the school, the curriculum, and everything else should reflect the fact that while bilingualism is a major concern of bilingual school, the other curriculum areas are of equal importance.

5. Both in terms of time and extension there is probably a minimum of bilingual schooling below which the returns diminish or disappear. Such schooling (even as is so with English-medium work) should continue as long as the child is in school. Within a single building, for example, *all* first grades, *all* second grades, etc., should be in the program. To involve but a single room at each grade level is to create a situation where bilingualism cannot flourish.

The article is taken from a report prepared by the National Puerto Rican Development and Training Institute, Inc. The report, "A Proposed Approach to Implement Bilingual Education Programs," is one of the most cogent and thorough statements yet made about bilingual school programs, and deserves a full reading. We are reprinting only sections of it.

6. The bilingual school can be seen as an educational institution where the non-English speaking child acquires English through a natural process. By the same token, this type of school should be seen as a school where children whose native language is English acquire another language. This is especially appropriate for children of the ethnic minorities who have lost or never had the language of their foreparents.

7. In an ideal sense it is highly desirable to teach Spanish to the Anglos too. In practical terms, *unless one can establish a full two-way* bilingual school, to combine Anglos and Hispanos in the same classes will greatly weaken the Spanish-medium work. This is so because the unequal background of the two groups forces the class into the weak mold of *foreign language instruction.* The teacher cannot use Spanish with full strength and authenticity.

8. Academic curriculum should provide learning activities integrating content and cognitive operations. For example, concerning storytelling activities in Language Art programs, children should know the story content, sequence, the theme, implication and the inference from the story.

9. The academic curriculum should provide opportunities for the children to perform problem-solving exercises. For example, in the learning of science concepts, a child should not only learn the concept that "things are heavier when wet" by viewing or touching it but also illustrate the concept through an experiment comparing the substance when it is dry and when wet on a scale. The important point is that he must know and show all the steps in order to solve the problem.

10. Academic curriculum should be appropriate to the child's level of cognitive development. It has been made apparent by the cognitive studies that some cognitive abilities will not emerge in certain age levels. For instance, the ability of extracting certain classification schema for various objects or the concept of reversibility will not manifest until 6 or 7 years of age. The modes of cognitive representation also vary in different age levels, usually progressing from concrete to abstract, from simple to complicated.

11. A culture is acquired by direct, frequent, varied participation and experience in all aspects of the life of a group of people. A very large part of this acquisition occurs outside of the learner's awareness. It also follows that culture in this deep sense cannot be taught in culture classes. Special efforts should be made to incorporate into the school, its curriculum, its staff and activities as many aspects as possible of the life of the groups to which the learners belong. Consequently, the entire curriculum should be designed to represent and reinforce the culture of the child and an attitude towards a critical analysis of culture.

12. The amount and quality of language experiences in school should take into consideration the language maintenance patterns of the community in the native language. The aim will be to maximize the use of bilingual instruction and peer group interaction to develop the equal fluency and literacy in both languages.

13. Mastery of reading and writing skills in the native language should precede the introduction of reading in the other language. Unless the

child indicates an interest to read in the other language sooner, the reading should proceed from his exposure and oral ability in the native language.

14. Language in terms of structure or forms should not be taught as a subject. For example, English as a Second Language or Spanish as a Second Language programs focusing on the drill of certain language aspects should be eliminated.

15. Development of language competence (including student's dominant and non-dominant language) is achieved through engaging the children in a content activity conducted in the target language. For example, while the teacher is demonstrating the activity he can be discussing what is happening in simple language. He does not stop the demonstration to ask the child any questions, he simply talks, as if to himself, while he is performing the activity. The child can then repeat the activity without resorting to language. While he is busy figuring out how to do whatever he is doing, he hears the teacher, and perhaps other children talking about it. Soon enough, he will learn to associate certain vocabulary terms with familiar objects, and all the while he is listening, his language learning strategies will be activated. Gradually, he will begin to speak. And when he does, no corrections will be necessary, as the errors will "iron themselves out" just as they did in the first acquisition.

16. The use of Spanish as a medium of instruction and other activities is a much more powerful and effective means of learning and teaching Spanish than studying and teaching it as a subject. Instruction in the language *per se* should be an ever-present concern of the teacher, but should be incidental to other more important activities.

17. Maximizing inter-relationships between subject matter: It has been stated before that using the language to teach something should receive more consideration than teaching language as a subject for its own sake. This automatically relates two formerly independent fields -- language and subject matter learning. For example, the learner can become aware of certain algebraic phenomena like language equivalents of addition, permutations and combinations. Or, by focusing on melody, pitch or volume he will be working with acoustics. Acoustics can also be a topic in relation to the use of language in different social situations, emotional loading, connotations, etc. Some physiological correlates of human, animal sounds can be studied as part of what is traditionally called "biological sciences." These relationships can be extended and/or refined, making them also relevant to the learner, his immediate community, his culture, etc. In a similar fashion, any activity of any "subject matter" can be analyzed to see direct or indirect implications for and from other subject matter areas. In addition to the effects on the motivation of learner, a new awareness about knowledge will be developed.

18. There should be no such thing as a special "bilingual method" of teaching. During Spanish-medium periods the teacher and pupils should act and work as if there were no other language in the world, and as if the child's entire education depended on that class. This means, essentially, that one language (or content in one language) should never be taught in terms of another language.

19. Presentation of the same subject matter content in two languages is unnecessary. This is nothing more than a disguised method of translation. Transfer does not depend on the redundant use of two languages as medium of instruction for the same concepts or skills, but on the proficiency in the use of the two languages. Furthermore, repetition only will serve to make the learning experience boring, thus creating indifference, passivity, withdrawal of attention, etc. A better approach is to provide parallel or complementary learning experiences that will acquaint the learner with the terminology used in both languages for the same subject matter. For example, in talking about insects, one language can be used to learn about the reproduction of insects while the other language is used as a vehicle for learning about the swamp ecology which includes insects.

20. The mastery of the content of the activity conducted in the non-dominant language initially should be independent of the child's competence in that language. For example, science activities that involve demonstration and manipulation of concrete objects such as growing plants or caring for animals.

21. The delicate question of dialectal variants of a language should be resolved by (1) using the child's language in the school (respecting it, studying it, writing it) while (2) moving steadily, broad-mindedly, towards adding another variant to the child's repertory -- the universal variant of that language. The teacher, preferably, should command both the "dialect" and the "standard."

22. Learners should be exposed to two adult figures of authority -- one dominant in English and one dominant in the other language. They should have a minimum level of understanding and preferably a speaking knowledge of other language.

23. It should be always kept in mind that while one can be bilingual at some stage of life, there can be a shift to monolinguism in the language that is associated with social, economic and political power.

24. The continuity of school and home is fostered by reproducing in the classroom environment selected aspects of the "natural environment" which can promote learning. This enables the child to see the relation between learning and his environment so that the school experience flows from the real experience of the child.

25. The learning situations should be flexible enough to accommodate the mode of presentation in terms of curriculum implementation. Individual learning is needed in certain situations, small group instruction in others, grouping by language domination in another, etc.

26. There is no universal grouping methods according to language dominance since different learning situations demand different types of grouping. At times, it is advisable that a homogeneous grouping be employed in activities such as learning to read, while heterogeneous grouping can be used for situations aimed at developing conversational skills.

27. Sequence of curriculum presentation should evolve out of the children's interest rather than being determined by rigid scheduling. Rigid scheduling dampens self-initiated activity.

28. Major objective of teaching techniques should be to maximize motivation to learn and to increase student's independence in the learning process.

29. Do not correct children. Self-correction is a function of language maturation. Evidence is that all children acquire their native language successfully without external interference. Frequent external correction dampens child motivation and initiative.

30. It is recommended that teachers respond to the content of what the child is trying to say or do rather than the form of what he says or does. For example: If a child says "want milk" it is recommended that the child be given milk if the situation is appropriate (lunch, snack time) rather than saying "please repeat -- I would like some milk" before giving it to him.

31. Any statement about "teaching method" would be equally pertinent to all education, both Spanish-medium and English-medium. For example, it is probably true that many teachers talk too much, that their interaction with learners is excessively limited to questions susceptible to one or two-word answers. This means that these teachers need help to understand and use many techniques to elicit a great deal of meaningful speech.

32. The stress in the interaction between the adult and a child should be on affection as opposed to punishment; emphasizing respect and avoiding paternalism. This kind of interaction should lead to a change in the attitude that a child is a thing or an object that can be changed or manipulated because "*it* belongs to us."

33. Use of peer group learning should be maximized both for language and non-language situations. Students with different skills, backgrounds and interests can be grouped together. For language learning it has been shown that children learn more from their peers than from "others" in the schools. The same is true for other subject matter areas.

34. There should be a plan to create frequent staff interaction. Science teachers, for example, rarely have contact with English or Social Studies teachers. Peer learning is as effective for adults as it is for students. This activity is instrumental to provide a "whole school" perspective and to offer options for greater variety and depth of learning activities.

35. Teachers should have the power, responsibility and skills to plan and develop their own curriculum whenever necessary. Not all commercially available materials are equally effective and relevant for many specific situations. This may be due to the fact that they are often not prepared by those who have to use them. Given proper training and power, no teacher needs to accept all materials offered. They should be free to determine classroom format such as "open" vs. "traditional."

36. It is not necessarily a prime qualification that teachers in bilingual schools be "bilingual." Since one group of teachers are Spanish-medium workers and another group English-medium workers, each needs to be competent *as teachers* in only one language. Of course it is psychologically advantageous for all faculty, etc., in the school building to know both languages, but it is far easier to find two teachers, one for Spanish and one for English, than to find two teachers, both of them equally compe-

tent in both languages.

37. The experience of having learned to be a teacher through English plus the ability to talk Spanish does not prepare a teacher for Spanish-medium work. Good knowledge of the language by the teacher implies knowledge of the literature, songs, folklore, geography, dialects, history, etc., of people who speak the language in question.

38. Teacher training should be focused on the learner; therefore, materials and teaching skills should be tailored to actual student's needs. It should include things like:

(a) Use of observations as tool for assessment.

(b) Designing and development of curriculum based upon observations.

(c) Survey of community.

(d) Understanding and knowledge of fundamentals of subject matter.

(e) Design and change of physical learning environment.

(f) Development of criteria for selection and/or development of teaching materials.

39. Teachers should be skillful and patient observers of *skills, interest,* and *difficulties* of learners. Observations will provide the basis for meaningful curricular activities. For example, if Student A has the ability and patience to assemble small objects, the teacher can provide appropriate materials such as construction kits of all kinds to be assembled by the child. These kits can be relevant to curriculum (e.g. students are talking about transportation; this student can be assembling model airplanes, cars, boats, etc.). Student B may be interested in playing with water. Possibilities like studying such properties as solubility, fluidity, and buoyancy will serve as guidelines for activities and materials. Student C has a difficulty in working with fractions. Further observation shows that this student has not been exposed to concrete situations dealing with whole-part relationships. Learning materials and activities related to available things like algebricks or cardboard-prepared sets of whole and parts can be introduced. In summary, active use of existing interests and skills can generate new ones.

40. There will always be an effort on the part of outsiders to force evaluation of bilingual schooling on the criterion of test scores, particularly reading scores. This is misguided, unfair, and should be stoutly resisted. Reading is only one factor among many, which include increased joyful participation of the children in their schooling, reduced absenteeism, reduced social conflict, increased involvement of the community. Above all, evaluation should be *formative*, feedback for self-correction and the eventual development of the *a priori* "model" into a true "model," i.e., exemplary program.

41. *Formative assessment* should aim at *diagnosing, finding probable causes* and *proposing alternatives.* A basic concern should be to know whether learning is or is not taking place and about the possible whys to the whats. As part of the program, everybody has to be involved in obtaining, providing and analyzing information. Staff interaction needs to maximize so that information is used continously in an integrated fashion.

42. The major *function* of adminis-

tration is decision-making. It should provide sound financing, facilities, equipment and personnel management, in addition to setting policies in cooperation with teachers, parents, students and community, and implementing those policies. In short, the administration should be goal-oriented, humanistic, dynamic, flexible, trained, forward-looking, involvement-minded, progressive, participatory, effective, democratic and alternative seeking.

43. The administration should be goal-oriented and objective. The administrative personnel should be trained in scientific decision-making and human relations. They should, on a continuous basis, be involved in the learning so that they can have first-hand knowledge of the actual experience of teachers and students.

44. The administrators should involve teachers, students, parents and community leaders in decision-making by continuously soliciting their ideas in solving day-to-day problems and in setting policies. Participation in decision-making will motivate all involved to strive harder and cooperate better in implementing decisions because of the feeling of responsibility on the part of the participants.

45. Effectiveness and not efficiency should be the aim of administration. Effectiveness means the extent to which the goals are being met whereas efficiency indicates the input-output relationships.

46. Continuous and systematic data gathering, assessment and feedback should be a part of the administration task. The assumption is that data on a day-to-day experience can and should be used to improve the system performance on a continuous basis.

47. The administration should be kept abreast of pedagogical, technological and social advances so that they can incorporate the appropriate ones into the system on a continuous basis.

48. A culture is imparted and acquired by direct, repeated and varied experiences outside the level of consciousness. Culture should not be "taught" separately in classes. Therefore, the teaching of culture cannot be confused with the teaching of folklore, history and artistic expression. The teaching of components of the experiences of the learners' cultural group is a very good thing and should be encouraged. Yet, this is only a limited aspect of culture. Culture is a much more inclusive term that deals with what a group of people think is real and ideal.

49. The only way that a culturally meaningful curriculum can be developed is to involve people whose culture one wants to teach on a day-to-day basis. This is true because culture "resides in" and is "transmitted by" people on this basis.

50. The teaching of culture should proceed from an understanding that this concept is useful in seeing similarities between groups of people as well as differences, but that differences *within* cultures may be greater than *between* cultures.

51. Culture is the total "real" and the "ideal" experiences of individuals that get generalized so that they become distinctive characteristics of the group these individuals belong to. If this is so, the term bicultural is a contradiction in terms. This would suppose that culture is equivalent to

language and can be acquired in the same way. There is no theoretical or empirical evidence that can support the concept.

52. The effectiveness of native language as a medium of work in the schools is tied to and will depend eventually on the status of it as a language of the people outside of the schools. Although there are a large number of socio-cultural factors which determine that status, a summary word is "prestige:" in the eyes of the non-native and of the native speakers themselves. The latter is a function of the quality and quantity of creative literary and other production in the language and the extent to which it is thought of as the precious, idealized symbol of being Puerto Rican or being Chicano, etc. Herein lies the gravest weakness of the bilingual education movement, and here is the place where much work must be done.

53. As a part of the campaign to give more prestige to a language such as Spanish (and thus facilitate the child's learning) there are many "ambient factors" that should be attended to:

(a) Signs in the school (even its name) should be beautiful, and in Spanish.

(b) School bulletins, notices, etc., and forms for the use of teachers, pupils and parents should be in Spanish.

(c) Merchants should be encouraged to use signs and ads in Spanish and these should be noted in the school's work.

(d) The principal and the clerical workers and janitor, etc., should be vigorous speakers of Spanish and should be encouraged to use it freely.

(e) Spanish should be used in many prestigious, public ways in the school, e.g. at assemblies and *outside of the classroom.*

(f) There should be a school paper (at least half in Spanish) to which the pupils contribute.

54. Research in the United States does show (J. Coleman, C. Jenks) that the child's family, the community, and the immediate society in which his life enfolds are more powerful educative influences than the school itself. Two corollaries flow from this: a) that the mutually-reinforcing relationship between the school and this immediate society should be made as strong as possible, and b) that if the school cuts the child off from the influence of that immediate society it is cutting him away from his main source of educative strength.

55. Although Spanish-medium work (bilingual schooling) is a powerful educational tool, it is more profitable to think of it not as a pedagogical innovation but as a broad *sociological movement.* Any bilingual schooling project should be tied to efforts outside the school to achieve social justice.

56. Community should be involved through *representation* and *participation* in the program's staff and its educational activities. The concept of a school as a center for leadership in learning embodies the idea that the use of the different experiences of humans in a relevant context is what constitutes the basis for learning and motivation. Community *representation* will provide an array of relevant experi-

ences, information and perceptions which, when analyzed and used in a process of *participation*, will provide the whole staff and the community some of the necessary bases to do education, which means learning, which means transformation. Participation in a dynamic model means activity with power, not the timid passivity of executing, implementing, tokenism, paternalism, or just being a member.

57. Community involvement should be differentiated from involvement of political leaders in the community, and it should proceed to see the community as a source for fulfilling many of the educational needs as opposed to limiting it to political managerial involvement. An emphasis should be made to identify social agencies that are daily used by the community, i.e. bodegas, barbershops, churches, and recruit participants from these sources in order to fill educational needs, to pass information, to receive feedback, etc. This is of special importance in the bilingual school, where there are needs that cannot be met by relying on the professional teaching staff or by buying commercially made materials.

58. Parent participation in most schools departs from a model which may not be always true of the society at large and is certainly not always true of ethnic minorities. This is the model of an isolated family unit made up of a father that works, a mother that stays at home, and a few children of close age that go to school. The role of other kin such as grandparents, older siblings, fictive (i.e. compadres) and true friends of the family has been underestimated. Since there is tremendous variation in the pattern of parental employment, with some fathers unemployed and many mothers employed outside the home, the care of the children is often shared by a number of people. Consequently, the goal of the parents' participation should be expanded to the concept of *family participation*.

59. Communication between the school and the family should be approached using a combination of ways. Written memos in both languages have their place but these have built-in limitations. Between people there is a network system that develops naturally or that can be activated. This network system is built as people communicate among themselves, especially between friends and kin and involves the passing on of information and the recruitment of potential participants. The important fact is that this social network system can serve as a monitoring system of feedback for the school.

> The notion that parents and teachers are as torn in their language loyalties as their children--torn on the question of Spanish or English dominance, say--is a very, very critical one. For me to talk about psychology in my native language, Hungarian, for example, is virtually impossible because I learned psychology as an English speaker and thinker. The language in which we learn something is usually the language in which we are comfortable in dealing with the whole area of related meanings and experiences. So if a teacher has been educated in English but her native language is in Spanish and she is now expected to teach in Spanish then there are many, many supportive experiences that she needs in order to be able to teach, fully and creatively, particularly in an open classroom where your own feeling of self confidence and your feeling about yourself as a source of English for the children is so crucial.
>
> *Vera John, at the Workshop Center*

My uncle

Baltazar Montes

One day, when Baltazar and I sat down to order science materials, we began to talk about what science means to young children and how it could be developed in the classroom. I told him many of the children in the school had experiences that could lead to further inquiry. For example, many of them had visited Puerto Rico and could tell a great deal about the sugar cane industry--the planting process, and so forth. It was at this point that Baltazar shaking his head, and smiling, began the story of his uncle.

Bonnie Brownstein

I asked my uncle about the sugar cane in Puerto Rico. I asked him where it grows. He said it's in the *Canaberales* of *Fincas* -- which is another word for the sugar cane plantations. He said we would have to take a train to the country to the centrales *(molinos)* where the sugar cane is crushed and melted and it becomes a melted mass of sweet thick pudding. When it cools off it turns solid, into a mass of candy. He said that there are containers that will give shape to all this melted sugar cane that turns dark brown. It is brown sugar. And he said that when it is purified this brown sugar turns white. He enjoyed watching the melted sugar cane in big containers -- as big as a large pot -- a large metal pot -- like the water towers on top of buildings. The *centrales (molianda)* is where all the men and women work together to cut the sugar cane and afterwards celebrate it when the sugar cane turns into candy. These people live in the *fincas* and their families take their children to school in the *finca* or to a small town near by. The main building or house is about three blocks from the ovens and this is where the sugar cane's warehouse is taken care of by the owners who live in a larger home right next to it. The workers live spread out around this area and are mostly the *jibaros* who are most of the day out in the field cutting the sugar cane when it's ripened. They usually wait till the sugar cane reaches a height of about four feet and wait to cut it in groups. Afterwards it is picked up by large trucks of about five tons at a time. Then it is taken to the *molinos* where the sugar cane is melted into this brown mass and is turned into sugar. Sometimes my uncle sees the trucks loading the sugar cane into ships and it's taken to other countries in its natural form so that sugar cane is an important export of Puerto Rico. He said that the sugar cane grows on very fertile soil and it needs to be re-planted every year. First they clear the fields by burning the dry skins which were left behind after the sugar cane was cut and stripped. The next harvest will start the new cycle of sugar cane. The interesting part, my uncle said, about the sugar cane plantations, is that one lives in it and will go horseback riding in order to get from one place to another. It is a beautiful experience when at night you hear the music played and the guitars of the farmers and the folk songs of sugar cane and the *molianda* make the night come alive. Everyone comes out of their homes and meets in the main corridor which is usually the landlord's house. It is a way of celebrating the end of a long working day in the *molianda*. Getting ready to start the next morning at sunrise. So that the next day is like something that everyone looks forward to.

Baltazar Montes is Coordinator of the Bilingual Program at P.S. 87.

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